Pathways to the Profession

An Outcomes Based Approach Towards Excellence in Canadian Public Relations and Communications Management Education

The National Council on Education

Canadian Public Relations Society

Advancing Public Relations & Communications Management

Acknowledgements

Use of Content

The use of the content of this report, including recommended program design and outcomes for the Pathway levels, are offered by Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS) as a tool to program developers and faculty in recognized Canadian post secondary institutes. The intended use of this tool is for such programs to be working towards a process of recognition of these programs by CPRS.

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Pathways to the Profession – An Overview

A new relationship for CPRS and educators

As a professional association, CPRS has worked closely for several years with many of Canada's post secondary institutes in supporting the development and implementation of programs in public relations (PR) and communications management (CM). Our role was to provide advice to educators about current public relations practice for use in curriculum. In recent years, institutes have asked us to step up even more by providing processes and support for consistency in curriculum and program planning that would lead to the formal recognition and endorsement by CPRS of educational programs. In addition, they asked for options to enrich students' learning experience with direct links to the profession.

In response, the CPRS Board established a National Council on Education. Included in its mandate was the need to develop guidelines and a clear overview that – from a professional association's perspective – reflected what was required in programs that would in turn reflect current practice. This project began by looking at requirements for curriculum standards but it quickly became apparent that PR education in Canada is offered in diverse ways within many autonomous institutes. Attempting to develop, for example, one set of learning criteria for PR and CM programs that could reflect a national standard proved impossible. Further, it negated the unique nature of the current slate of programs along with the independent decision making incorporated by the respective institutes which offer them. Yet clearly there was a strong interest in CPRS being involved; formal recognition of programs was valued by institutes. As a way to address this while respecting the independent nature of programs, the CPRS National Council on Education developed the Pathways program introduced in this document.

The Pathways program uses an integrated program planning model that includes an emphasis on program outcomes along with recommendations for a course framework. The Pathways presented here will give the CPRS National Council on Education the "yardstick" needed to recognize programs and support learners. More importantly, this approach also offers institutes a way to assess their own programs and to provide context for ongoing and future curriculum development. We hope this will be a highly useful document to program developers and we look forward to working with educational institutes that incorporate this content as a starting point for either new development or renewal.

The Pathways Program includes these highlights:

SECTION 1 provides a context for education in Canada by looking at an historical overview, reviewing the approach of PRSA in the United States, reviewing current employment trends in Canada and briefly highlighting feedback from current employers on PR and CM graduates' strengths and weaknesses.

SECTION 2 emphasizes a framework for current education programs in Canada and incorporates a new Canadian definition of public relations which has been endorsed by the National Board of CPRS.

SECTION 3 reviews planning principles which the Council used in this process, including the incorporation of CPRS values which, while stated for professional practice, should also be woven as general themes in program content.

SECTION 4 introduces the Pathways, with five levels identified. Institutes can "self select" where their programs – current and planned – best fit. This will be particularly important should institutes wish to pursue a formal recognition process with CPRS for their programs.

This section also looks at program outcomes for each of the levels as well as possible performance measures. Finally, a framework for course development is provided and will be useful in both new development and review.

SECTION 5 looks at how CPRS can further build relationships with institutes and faculty by discussing formal recognition of educational programs by CPRS.

SECTION 1
Setting the Context for Educational Standards

1.1 – Introduction

As a professional association, the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS) has a responsibility to play an active role as advisor in the development and maintenance of post secondary education programs to ensure they reflect current theory, practice, professional values, and relevancy. Further, it has a mandate to ensure high levels of professionalism and undertakes this by:

- ensuring that an ethical code of standards is adhered to;

- developing professional standards through accreditation;

- providing professional development opportunities that bring forward current issues, trends and best practices to its members;

- supporting and promoting best practices through an awards program.

1.2 – An Overview

Historically, public relations practice was recognized in the 1940s as a business function in both the public and the private sectors. The first Canadian university courses in public relations were offered in 1948 and 1949. Leonard Knott taught the first PR course at McGill in 1948 and in 1949 the University of Toronto launched its course, co-sponsored by the Public Relations Association of Ontario and the Advertising & Sales Club in Toronto. By 1958, a Canadian conference on education included discussion on the need for public relations education and acknowledged the work being done by organizations like CPRS. In 1961, CPRS signed its Code of Professional Standards which outlines the ethical standards for the practice. During the 1960s and 1970s, public relations education continued to be developed across Canada with the assistance of CPRS local societies. By 1977, the first national recommended standards in education were developed with CPRS involvement and the public relations Bachelors Degree program was launched at Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax.

In 1979, the Communications and Public Relations Foundation was established with a focus on increasing the knowledge and awareness of the practice of public relations and communications by providing support to educational initiatives.

By 1985, in response to the growth of programs and courses throughout Canada, educational standards were revised along with the development of a curriculum review process. This work was followed by the publication of a curriculum guide for public relations education.

Since then, many Member Societies of CPRS have played active roles in partnering with post secondary institutes to ensure that educational opportunities exist for regional learners. Canadian institutes have been well served by such support and local CPRS boards have contributed to this process by participating on program advisory committees; sponsoring activities, bursaries and awards programs; and developing and maintaining student membership and programming. Individual members of CPRS have further supported this by acting as instructors and teachers, guest speakers, mentors, and employers. In a few instances, the relationship has been formal and has included the Local Member Society endorsement of academic programs.

While this decentralized relationship has produced some creative options for learners in many communities, institutes at the forefront of PR and CM education have indicated both a need and an interest in taking this further and in establishing a relationship with CPRS at a national level. Further, CPRS National has long recognized that a key service it can provide to institutes and Member Societies alike is through the standardizing of curriculum and program outcomes. Such a service would aim to balance existing key commonalities in offerings across Canada while continuing to recognize autonomous and unique elements of educational programs. This link has the potential to allow for a clear and common understanding of PR and CM program outcomes and supports a much higher level of portability of skills, knowledge and abilities for today's highly mobile workforce.

Since CPRS first began to explore this option in the 1980s, there has continued to be wide proliferation of PR and CM education programs. This has corresponded with the increased acceptance and understanding of public relations as a key management tool and the greater awareness of career opportunities available to the incoming work force. To that end, programs are increasingly shifting from a basis in communications arts and journalism to a management orientation.

To support institutes and Member Societies and to ensure a level of sound and reasonably consistent

core programming that meets professional guidelines and standards, CPRS has worked to establish general guidelines for curriculum development that are in sync with the profession's values today. These guidelines not only match where the profession is right now, but where it is going in the future.

This document is therefore offered as a primer to institutes considering offering programming in PR and CM education, as well as offering a benchmark for educators who might be reviewing or updating programs. CPRS welcomes the opportunity to work mutually with institutes to meet the education standards set here, to support institutes by providing state-of-the-art PR and CM programming and ultimately, to meet the needs of the practice and our learners.

1.3 – Background

Reflective of the evolution of PR and CM as a strategic management tool, CPRS is not alone as a professional society in looking both to its influence, ability, and responsibility for establishing what it requires from the post secondary education system. CPRS first began to look at the issue of standards related to this in the 1980's.

The Commission on Public Relations Education, managed by The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), has been a leader in working with American institutes in endorsing and accrediting education programs and in establishing educational standards that are to be met for this recognition to occur. *The Port of Entry (1999)* and *The Professional Bond (2006)* were developed by The Commission to highlight what is expected of education and offered an overview of curricula based predominantly on recommended courses. These reports offer a clear philosophical approach to PR education while recognizing the autonomy of educational programmers and faculty in their development.

Similarly, The Commission is responding to the need for standards as demands from both the profession and programs swing upwards. *The Professional Bond* states that:

> *Growth in public relations education is not just a matter of raw numbers, such as those reflected in the ever-increasing classroom enrolments. It is also occurring relative to other areas within communication, journalism and related fields, such as marketing and management. For example, the May 2005 newsletter of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) reported that in just the 197 universities responding to a survey, there were 281 relevant programs – 133 in public relations, 95 in advertising and 53 in joint*

advertising and PR programs. Since 1992-93, the number of public relations programs increased by 14, while advertising dropped by 25.

On yet another very important front, the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) has grown to more than 270 chapters.

A 2008 report from Leeds Metropolitan University in England takes a global look at PR education. *Towards a Global Curriculum* highlights that education is critical to establishing a professional basis. Further, with a merging economy, a global perspective in PR that highlights a "planning attitude" will require some standardization of shared approaches worldwide that education can and should address, along with clarification of what PR and CM can – and cannot – do for the organization.

1.4 – Employment Trends

CPRS has noted a series of trends indicating that opportunities for PR and CM practitioners continue to be plentiful. In 2006, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) highlighted growth in PR-related job classifications in both full and part time categories, offering opportunities in both contract (consulting) and organizational corporate communications. Unemployment in this sector is still significantly under the national average, currently standing (as of September 2009) at 4.18% compared to a national average of nearly 8.01%. (retrieved from www.Jobfutures.ca, 2010, NOC Code 5124).

Two regional focus group sessions undertaken in 2007 with industry representatives from the non-profit, public, transportation, private, and agency sector indicate that there is a real need for PR and CM education to "round out" the skill set of current and future practitioners. Work exists at an entry junior management level for those who can manage projects well; write for a variety of organizational needs; understand the organizational context; work well in teams; and develop and implement a range of public relations and communication plans for different situations.

In addition, the public sector at all three levels of government across Canada is expanding opportunities for practitioners at the early and mid stages of their careers. Trends from local and provincial government sectors indicate a shortage of entry level PR and corporate communications practitioners, which began as a trend in late 2006. This trend is reflective of shifting demographics as baby boomers leave the workforce, freeing up opportunities for both organizations and new employees. Indeed, CPRS' membership data for 2008 indicates that

29 – 34% of members will be eligible for retirement within the next four to 10 years.

While the need exists for new practitioners, current employers highlight that overall, graduates have a respectable skill set, but some gaps remain.

While new graduates are creative and entrepreneurial, employers comment on the ongoing need for:

- even more accomplished writers;

- more critical analysis within the workplace;

- better understanding and application of research;

- higher exposure to business practices, including a fundamental understanding of management, economics, financial management, organizational behaviour, project management, self direction, and leadership skills.

The need for critical thinking, teamwork and analytical ability, along with a strong work ethic and an ability to multitask and manage time effectively under the pressure of competing deadlines, continue to be cited by employers as skills required from new graduates.

There is concern that many new practitioners are unaware of broader current and global events and issues that may have an impact on their organizations. Graduates need to have a higher level of awareness of trends and current events, be more curious and mindfully aware of their environment, government, and community and have an understanding of how these link with one another.

Finally, a commitment to lifelong learning is expected of graduates. When considering employee attributes, employers now consider building on formal education and professional development a "must" (through either continuing education programs at the undergraduate or post graduate level or most appropriately through CPRS' professional accreditation program) for graduates.

SECTION 2
A Framework

2.1 – A Canadian Definition of Public Relations

Program developers, instructors, and faculty in public relations need to be familiar with how the profession defines itself, as this provides a philosophical context for curriculum. As an important starting point, CPRS has approved the following 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, 2009)

As such, a key orientation for PR and CM today is its role within a management framework. Defining PR as a management function is important to its positioning as a discipline for educators.

2.2 – The Evolution of PR Education in Canada

As a profession, PR and CM have undergone dramatic changes in the past twenty years. Increasingly, it is transforming from an applied art to a management function, designed to support the modern organization and senior management team in building relationships; enhancing and keeping reputation; building support and awareness for an organization's mission, mandate, and objectives; and ensuring clarity and consistency in its purpose. Its key tool for effectively supporting these functions is an understanding of the use of strategic communications.

Canadian PR and CM education has also changed and grown exponentially. This is due to the development of the profession as well as the growing interest among learners at various stages of their own professional development who seek current and relevant PR and CM courses. At the time of writing, CPRS has noted that there are more than 12 certificate and continuing education programs, 12 diploma programs, five baccalaureate degrees with three more in development, nine post graduate diploma or certificate programs and two post graduate degrees in communications management, public relations or both.

CPRS has had direct relationships with well over half of these programs.

Programs are offered in a number of formats and delivery styles. Many are adding more online availability and/or using hybrid (face-to-face with online components) and fully online models, reflecting learners' needs for flexible options.

Educational institutes are increasingly addressing the needs of its various learners, including more part timers, mature learners, and individuals undergoing a career change into this profession, many of whom already have other academic backgrounds.

The following table provides broad definitions of the most common of these formats and includes a general description of what these programs might look like. It should be noted that there are different mandates for institutes, including colleges and universities, because expectations differ depending on provincial jurisdictions. Different funding models impact these broad categories and the general definitions offered here give a sense of the scope and type of programming currently available. CPRS is aware that different schools may define programs in different ways and hence this table provides context only. However, it serves as a starting point for discussing and developing outcomes for PR education. CPRS welcomes the opportunity to further refine this list with interested institutes.

Table 1: General Categories of PR Education Programs in Canada and the Typical Learner

Note: in SECTION 4, these categories are woven into a curriculum framework that builds on the concept of educational "laddering" by indicating pathways for learners, based on their career and professional goals.

Program	Learner
Individual courses in PR theory and practice, offered through schools of journalism, communications, and management at the undergraduate and graduate level	May include the full time learner in a discipline or program area that takes a PR course as an elective or students in programs such as marketing or journalism who are required to complete introductory courses to better understand the principles of public relations in relation to their own program area.
Certificate programs (defined for this report as entry level but with some minimum admission requirements) usually offered as full time equivalent of one-year courses. These courses may or may not be for credit.	Typically this learner is part time and defined as mature or career, and might be upgrading or seeking a career change into public relations. The education objective of this learner is often to "round out" academically what they may in effect already be doing professionally. These programs are often, but not exclusively, offered through continuing education departments of universities and colleges.
Diploma programs, reflecting up to two years full time equivalent (FTE) of credit studies. Entry level.	This program is designed for the full time student who wishes to focus on an area of study in PR with the intent of completing the program and finding employment within PR. As a result, there is frequently an applied element to the program which provides an element of work experience, including volunteer, internship, co-op, or paid employment. A growing trend within this type of offering is the move for students to undertake their studies as part timers. Several Canadian institutes report that up to 40 per cent of students in PR diploma programs are part timers. Most are working to supplement studies and gain appropriate experience. These programs are offered in management, media, communications and arts schools.
Undergraduate degree, applied and bachelor, providing three to four years of full time equivalent (FTE) credit studies.	This learner mirrors that of the diploma program. However, there is an interest in developing more depth and breadth in the area of public relations along with electives in social sciences and/or management. Students in applied degrees often have a work component as part of their program requirements through internships, co-op and/or community/volunteer based projects.
Post graduate certificate / diploma. The courses are for credit, offering one to two years of full time equivalent (FTE) study.	These programs are frequently aimed at the mid-career learner who wishes to keep abreast of current trends in the management practice of public relations or the learner who has already completed a degree or diploma in another discipline and wishes to enhance employment opportunities by adding public relations to the academic mix. They seek a focus that will enhance their strategic skills and build their careers to a higher management level.
Post graduate degrees (Masters)	Currently in Canada, most programs at this level are designed to provide an advanced theoretical and research based component. Most students have experienced careers in PR and CM at a management level and may even have an undergraduate degree in this area. Many of these students are part time, incorporating research and other course based activities in their workplace.

Planning Principles

3.1 – The Industry / CPRS Perspective

PR and CM are part of a rapidly changing profession that has undergone considerable change in a very recent timeframe. As a professional association, CPRS needs to provide support to members and their employers to ensure high levels of professionalism and competence, resulting in strategic and ethical practitioners.

CPRS has a commitment to education, professional development and accreditation which are key pillars in providing these standards to our current and future members.

Ideally, CPRS seeks a core of PR academic courses offered throughout Canada that are consistent with the practice and profession. It is critical that post secondary institutes have the autonomy to manage content, instruction, structure, enrolment, admission, faculty selection, and resourcing for such courses and programs. However, CPRS believes that it has a role to play in supporting programming by collaborating with educators to ensure that relevant and current practices are reflected in the Canadian PR and CM curriculum.

3.2 – The Education Perspective

CPRS is mindful that educational institutes are also held today to higher levels of accountability from students, graduates, employers, and industry. Graduates of Canada's PR and CM programs are expected to be career-oriented and able to move into effective employment with a sound understanding of current and relevant practice, principles and theory.

In addition, institutes are confronted with operating in an environment of reduced resources and therefore need to look at programming opportunities that will meet enrolment and financial requirements, by being cost effective and meeting student needs.

3.3 – Curriculum Approach

The approach reflected in the following is learner and industry centered and is designed to give institutes who are considering establishing PR programs or undertaking reviews of current programs a framework for the decision-making that needs to accompany this development.

What follows are recommendations from CPRS that acknowledge the independent role of programmers and faculty in development and delivery, and is in no way intended to be prescriptive.

However, CPRS does have a strong interest in ensuring that curriculum provided by Canadian institutes reflects what is germane to the profession as it currently stands and will be addressing in the future, and is most willing to collaborate with institutes undergoing these processes. Finally, the approach recommended here will form part of CPRS's review and formal recognition of educational programs.

3.4 – Weaving in CPRS Values

CPRS has developed value statements that can be incorporated as guiding principles for education programs. Ideally, these would run as themes throughout all content and could be further reflected in individual courses. They give a focus or "lens" with which to assess content delivery.

These include:

An Ethical Practice that is:
- Transparent (open, honest, and willing to share information)
- Accountable
- 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 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

The Pathways Model for PR and CM Educational Program Development

4.1 – The Pathways

Because diverse educational opportunities and offerings for PR and CM studies exist within Canada, CPRS wishes to take an approach that will accommodate the nomenclature and credentialing of institutes with its own need to have graduates of PR and CM programs reflect skills, knowledge and abilities based on assessed program outcomes. Thus, this report will reflect a "pathways" approach to programming. It is assumed that institutes will best see their goals and objectives for programming reflected in the following and that program development will also reflect this. In addition, pathways can "ladder" into one another, allowing a relatively seamless progression for the learner.

As part of CPRS' recognition of educational programs, institutes may self select the pathways category which best reflects the education program they are offering.

There are five pathways to the profession:
Level 1 – The Technical Pathway
Level 2 – The Career Pathway
Level 3 – The Management Pathway
Level 4 – The Leadership Pathway
Level 5 – The Scholar Pathway

The intent and parameters for each will be highlighted throughout this section.

4.2 – Applying the Pathways Model

In this section, recommendations are made for program and course content. The pathways model allows programmers to "self select" where their program best fits, while still keeping in mind proposed program outcomes and courses. Details of proposed courses and performance measures for learning outcomes follow.

Program Outcomes are statements of the capabilities CPRS believes graduates should have after completing programs integrating the pathways model. Assessments tools can be developed by instructors that highlight how

the outcomes have been achieved. Many of the outcomes are highly complex and meeting them within a program will likely involve more than one course.

Performance measures, which provide more detail for each outcome, follow each outcome.

Course content is offered as a general guideline. While individual courses may be developed to address content recommendations, this report acknowledges that some content might be woven into several courses throughout a program.

Course Framework presents key areas which guide program development:

- *Public Relations Theory and Practice* provides context for models, research and theory that supports the profession.

- *Management Theory and Practice* incorporates PR and CM into organizational structure and strategy.

- *Personal and Group Competencies* speaks to ways of work and skills sets required in the management of self.

- *Applied/Integrative Practice* reflects how theory is applied, either in the classroom with "real world" experiences or through external opportunities, including projects and work experiences.

Diagram 1: Foundation of the Course Framework

Values to be woven into and reflected in content
- Ethical practice
- Strategic practice
- Mutual benefit
- Leadership and engagement
- Continuous learning

Program Outcomes

Course Framework

The Pathways Model for PR and CM Educational Program Development
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 public interest.

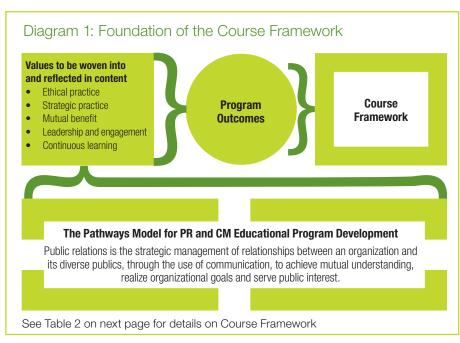See Table 2 on next page for details on Course Framework

Table 2: Pathways to the Profession Course Framework

PR Theory and Practices	Management Theory and Practice	Personal and Group Competencies	Applied / Integrative Practice	Pathways Level
Introduction to PR and CM theory, principles and practices Communications theories Writing for PR Communications tools overview Introductory media relations Tactical communications and special event planning	Introduction to ethical decision making Introduction to advertising, web design and social media Software tools and applications	Group and team work Management of self Critical thinking	Applied and experiential projects as part of course work	**Level 1** **Technical Pathway**
The theory and practice of PR and CM Media relations Communications planning Communications tools and production New and social media Advanced writing Print production	Basic research and evluations Ethics Introduction to management Basic financial management including budgeting Organization development Basics of project management Basics of planning	Theory of groups Team charter process Effective business communications Time management	Case studies Co-op, work term or internships Mentorships and learning from external experts	**Level 2** **Career Pathway**
Strategic communications planning Issues management Crisis management Reputation management Principles of persuasion Stakeholder relations Advocacy	Financial management for PR Corporate social responsibility Managing team processes Business ethics Public opinion Internal and external consulting skills Introduction to corporate and communications law Introduction to HR management	Managing and leading teams Current events and media literacy	Case studies Work experience	**Level 3** **Management Pathway**
Managing the PR function Stakeholder management Reputation management Areas of specialization including investor relations, government relations and public affairs Consulting and collaboration History and evaluation of PR and CM	Organizational policy Financial reporting and accounting Risk management PERT analysis Strategic planning Operational planning Principles of influence Strategic management Corporate social responsibility	Internal consulting Managing change Personal leadership Personal learning planning Motivation Negotiation and conflict management	Ongoing management work experience	**Level 4** **Leadership Pathway**

4.3 – Level 1 – The Technical Pathway

At the first level is the technician. Programming here is aimed at ensuring that basic PR and CM skills are taught, along with elemental theory and practice. Learners at this level have often entered from high school or are making a program change. Programs are often one to two years full time in duration and may result in the granting of a diploma or a certificate. Programs offered at this level might be incorporated in the vocational or career track within an institute. Graduates are work-ready for positions at a junior and technical level of public relations.

Program Outcome 1: Communicate effectively at both a personal and organizational level by using a variety of communication tools and techniques

Performance Measures:

* Understand and use clear writing and demonstrate an appropriate command of grammar, punctuation, and spelling, free of errors.

* Write and produce a wide range of communications tools including brochures, correspondence, and organizational material.

* Write speeches to persuade, influence and inform.

* Plan and prepare newsletters for both internal and external use by an organization.

* Produce feature articles for newsletters, newspapers, or magazines.

* Demonstrate writing for the web.

* Monitor and implement strategies using social media.

* Develop material that is graphically and visually appealing including print material and websites.

Program Outcome 2: Develop and support media relations strategies as part of organizational communications

Performance Measures:

* Explain the difference between reactive and proactive media relations strategies.

* Compose all elements of a media kit, including news release, media advisory, biography, backgrounder, and fact sheet.

* Prepare news releases and information materials using Canadian Press (CP) and related journalistic style.

* Monitor media response to organizational and industry related issues.

Program Outcome 3: Apply knowledge of public relations theories and practices to develop and execute basic tactical communication plans

Performance Measures:

* Describe the goals of a communication plan from a public relations perspective.

* Develop and implement a tactical plan.

* Develop and implement a special events plan.

* Support planning for more complex processes.

* Explain simple models of social communications theory.

* Define the impact of theories on public relations programs.

* Explain the impact of current events and trends on the individual and the organization.

Program Outcome 4: Use appropriate software and hardware to support organizational and public relations functions

Performance Measures:

* Proficient in current software applications used in organizations.

* Use basic applications of software packages suitable for desktop and web publishing.

Program Outcome 5: Develop a personal ethical framework for decision making

Performance Measures:

* Examine organizational values and ethics.

* Develop a personal code of ethics for use in the workplace and identify personal values as they pertain to career expectations and aspirations.

* Assess his/her fit within an organization based on shared values and ethics.

* Recognize and explain basic PR values in relation to ethical dilemmas.

Recommended Course Content for Level 1 – The Technical Pathway

Recommended course content might be incorporated into specific courses or, because of the complexity, be woven into several courses.

Table 3: Course Framework for the Technical Pathway

PR Theory and Practices	Management Theory and Practice	Personal and Group Competencies	Applied / Integrative Practice
Introduction to PR and CM theory, principles, and practice	Introduction to ethical decision making	Group and team work	Applied and experiential projects as part of course work
Communication theories	Introduction to advertising, web design and social media	Management of self	
Writing for PR	Software tools and application	Critical thinking	
Communication tools overview			
Introductory media relations			
Tactical communication planning and special events planning			

4.4 – Level 2 – The Career Pathway

At this next level, the learner may enter a program after a gap from high school or with other undergraduate post secondary education behind them. They are looking to gain a skill set that will support career objectives of entering PR. Programs here are three and four years in duration leading to a degree in PR and CM. Programs are also likely career track. Institutes may have these students as a result of "two plus two" models whereby students have completed their first two years in a diploma program and are now laddering into the final two years for an undergraduate degree.

These programs overall provide a greater level of depth and breadth to the PR and CM education. Graduates will leave with an undergraduate baccalaureate degree. They will be ready for positions as junior managers or as information and communication officers.

Program Outcome 1: Develop clear and measurable communication objectives and identify techniques to evaluate the achievement of these objectives

Performance Measures:

- Differentiate between goals and objectives.

- Establish and differentiate between reputation management goals, relationship management goals, and task management goals.

- Write measurable objectives.

- Formulate evaluation strategies reflective of the measurable objectives.

- Manage projects.

- Ensure that communication planning objectives are aligned with organizational goals.

Program Outcome 2: Complete all work in accordance with public relations codes of professional ethics, standards, and practices and relevant law.

Performance Measures:

- Recall and understand the CPRS code of ethics for PR professionals and apply to real business situations and cases.

- Identify corporate values.

Program Outcome 3: Apply creative approaches to communications planning, execution and problem solving

Performance Measures:

- Classify campaigns by type and objective.

- Conduct formative research.

- Devise a campaign strategy.

- Create communication tactics.

- Conduct evaluative research.

- Apply knowledge and build skills by planning and proposing a public relations campaign.

Program Outcome 4: Use research skills to meet specified communication objectives

Performance Measures:

- Set measurable objectives for communication outcomes.

- Choose the most appropriate metrics that apply to the right aspects of the communication plan.

- Explain and apply qualitative and quantitative research techniques for measuring messages, communication channels, and organizational outcomes.

- Manage a research project.

- Analyze and communicate research findings using independent critical thinking.

- Incorporate an awareness of ethical issues associated with conducting research on human participants.

Program Outcome 5: Implement project management strategies in support of PR plans and activities

Performance Measures:

- Develop, execute, and monitor action plans as part of communication planning.

- Delegate and monitor the progress of plans.

- Manage the implementation of plans.

- Develop and monitor project budgets.

Program Outcome 6: Implement management strategies to ensure accountability and effectiveness

Performance Measures:

- Liaise with staff and vendors to ensure that communication objectives are met.

- Manage project budgets.

- Function as an effective and responsible member of an organizational team.

Recommended Course Content for Level 2: The Career Pathway

Recommended course content might be incorporated into specific courses or, because of the complexity, be woven into several courses.

Table 4: Course Framework for the Career Pathway

PR Theory and Practices	Management Theory and Practice	Personal and Group Competencies	Applied / Integrative Practice
The theory and practice of PR and CM	Basic research and evaluation	Theory of groups	Case studies
Media relations	Ethics	Team charter process	Co-op, work terms or internships
Communication planning	Introduction to management	Effective business communications	Mentorships and learning from external experts
Communication tools and production	Basic financial management including budgeting	Time management	
New and social media	Marketing, IMC		
Advanced writing	Organizational development		
Print production	Basic of project management		
	Basics of planning		

4.5 – Level 3 – The Management Pathway

At the third level is the learner who is approaching this to build a management skill set suitable for mid-entry management positions. The emphasis here is more on working with corporate communications as a strategic organizational function with greater depth in planning and strategy. In addition, it is assumed that programs at this level include more in-depth business literacy. Programs may include post graduate certificates and continuing education certificates or diplomas. Learners are often already working in PR and CM and are using such programs to supplement their "on the job" experience to further career aspirations to work as PR and CM managers. They may also ladder in from different disciplines. These graduates may have aspirations to undertake the accreditation program offered by CPRS.

Program Outcome 1: Apply knowledge of public relations, corporate communications, and organizational theories and practices that support a strategic role for the function

Performance Measures:

- Apply knowledge of contemporary organizational theories.
- Use strategic thinking to develop and execute communication plans, incorporating research, analysis, communications, and evaluation.
- Execute a complex communications plan using appropriate strategies and tactics.
- Examine the influence of organizational and community dynamics on the communications planning process.
- Develop and define communication objectives based on needs and criteria for projects and plans, in consultation with stakeholders.
- Develop communication plans to support the needs of internal and external stakeholders.
- Examine the impact of corporate culture on communications.
- Develop a budget for communication plans.

Program Outcome 2: Apply creative approaches to complex communications and organizational issues using a range of communication planning processes that define appropriate strategy, implementation, and problem solving

Performance Measures:

- Choose and apply critical thinking skills and strategies.
- Analyze ideas, concepts, and programs to determine influencing factors.
- Generate creative ideas for strategies and solutions considering organizational dynamics, concepts, themes, and opportunities.
- Critique problems and recognize opportunities.

Program Outcome 3: Display a commitment to lifelong learning, both within and outside the work environment

Performance Measures:

- Debate public relations and organizational communication issues and trends.
- Compare and assess own skills and knowledge.
- Adapt own skills, knowledge, and values to new situations.
- Display enthusiasm for continued learning and personal growth.
- Demonstrate an interest and a plan for professional accreditation.

Program Outcome 4: Apply principles of advocacy and ethics and be able to make decisions or recommendations for action based on sound principles of each

Performance Measures:

- Work within established organizational culture and acknowledge its impact on an organization's changing needs.
- Follow correct organizational process when preparing and submitting work.
- Compare and contrast organizational behaviour theories used to influence corporate/organizational culture.

Program Outcome 5: Display mindful awareness of events, trends and cultural shifts that impact the organization and can be used in proactive ways in communications management activities

Performance Measures:

- Examine current trends and issues and their potential impact on the organization.
- Translate issues from the particular to broader implications.
- Identify how events, trends and cultural shifts might be used in communication activities.

Program Outcome 6: Function in a responsible, professional, trustworthy, and accountable manner respecting the legal, moral, and ethical practice

- Examine ethical, legal, and moral issues facing organizations.

- Conduct oneself within professional and organizational codes of conduct.
- Recognize the significance and implications of relevant laws (such as privacy, defamation, intellectual property, investor relations) on the communication function or plans.
- Recognize the importance of corporate social responsibility frameworks on organizational reputation.

Program Outcome 7: Conduct and co-ordinate research and evaluation processes to support communications and public relations strategies

Performance Measures:

- Conduct strategies to effectively implement and monitor the outcomes of plans, issues, and activities.
- Monitor and evaluate methods of output, process, and outcomes.
- Report on project status.

Program Outcome 8: Function as an effective member of a team

- Prepare plans in teams.
- Work on events in groups.
- Collaborate/brainstorm ideas with partners for group projects in-class.
- Prepare and present group presentations.
- Provide counsel and advice in a persuasive and tactful manner.

Program Outcome 9: Provide leadership in implementation of PR and CM objectives

- Advises and counsels managers and team leaders.
- Executes organizational public relations plans.
- Aligns PR and CM function with organizational business objectives.
- Supports the development of communication procedures and policies.

Recommended Course Content for Level 3 – The Management Pathway

Recommended course content might be incorporated into specific courses or, because of the complexity, be woven into several courses.

Table 5: Course Framework for the Management Pathway

PR Theory and Practices	Management Theory and Practice	Personal and Group Competencies	Applied / Integrative Practice
Strategic communications planning	Financial management for PR	Managing and leading teams	Case studies
Issues management	Corporate social responsibility	Current events and media literacy	Work experience
Crisis management	Managing team processes		
Reputation management	Environmental analysis and trends		
Principles of persuasion	Business ethics		
Stakeholder relations	Public opinion		
Advocacy	Internal and external consulting skills		
	Introduction to corporate and communications law		
	Introduction to HR management		

4.6 – Level 4 – The Leadership Pathway

At this level, the learner has been in the workforce (often already as a PR manager) and the context for PR management has been undertaken "on the job." These learners are looking for programming that will provide theory for what they currently do and skills to move them into an organizational leadership position. There is in-depth analysis of strategy, production, and leadership. Because of their previous experience, learners are likely already Accredited in Public Relations (APR) or on the path to accreditation. Programs can be offered at the graduate level and could either ladder into or are part of masters programs.

Program Outcome 1: Apply theory models and concepts of PR and CM based upon a critical analysis of their relevance to individual practice and to the profession as a whole

Performance Measures:

- Compare and contrast current models of PR and CM and explain the application of each to the work place.
- Summarize the role of PR and CM in society.

Program Outcome 2: Use research to develop and expand on a body of knowledge

Performance Measures:

- Deliver original quantitative and qualitative research to support projects.
- Create original work that supports areas of PR and CM specialization, based on industry or area.
- Identify the appropriate use of qualitative and quantitative methods.

Program Outcome 3: Provide leadership to the organization on reputation, relationships and positioning

Performance Measures:

- Plan and implement organizational communication priorities.
- Develop high-level reputation management strategies.
- Provides counsel and strategies in support of the reputation management of the organization.
- Generate planning processes aligned with organizational strategy.
- Evaluate issues, opportunities, and challenges facing the organization and develop strategies to address these factors.
- Relate leadership theories and identify and exhibit personal leadership traits.

Program Outcome 4: Articulate the status of PR and CM within a broad social context and apply this to the immediate organizational one

Performance Measures:

- Appraise current thinking on PR and CM and determine its applicability to the work place.
- Compare the historical context of PR and CM to the present.
- Describe the evolution of PR and CM based on a theoretical framework.

Program Outcome 5: Engage in professional opportunities that support a deeper understanding of the self and of the profession

Performance Measures:

- Self reflect on the application of work to career planning and personal objectives.
- Engage in professional and personal activities that highlight an ongoing plan for learning.
- Develop personal learning plans.
- Interpret current content and knowledge to assess best practices.
- Construct theory about professional practice.
- Engage in professional opportunities that support the search of excellence.

Program Outcome 6: Display mindfulness of the role of the organizational leader

Performance Measures:

- Discuss current management theory.
- Appraise the impact of global, national, and local events on the organization and its operations.
- Understand fundamental elements of business, including financial, organizational, and human resources.
- Exhibit high levels of trustworthiness and professionalism.

Recommended Course Content for Level 4 – The Leadership Pathway

Recommended course content might be incorporated into specific courses or, because of the complexity, be woven into several courses.

Table 6: Course Framework for the Leadership Pathway

PR Theory and Practices	Management Theory and Practice	Personal and Group Competencies	Applied / Integrative Practice
Managing the PR function	Organizational policy	Internal consulting	Ongoing management work experience
Stakeholder management	Financial reporting and accounting	Managing change	
Reputation management	Risk management	Personal leadership	
Areas of specialization including investor relations, government relations and public affairs	PERT analysis	Personal learning planning	
Consultation and collaboration	Strategic planning	Motivation	
History and evolution of PR and CM	Operational planning	Negotiation and conflict management	
	Organizational leadership		
	Principles of influence		
	Strategic management		
	Corporate social responsibility		

4.7 – Level 5 – The Scholar Pathway

Learners at this level have identified an interest in pursuing public relations at the scholarly level, involving a higher level of research, theory and discourse. Learners here are looking for a career in academia rather than as managers of the PR function. While important to note this pathway in this document, there are currently a limited number of Canadian-based opportunities in this track. Therefore, the report will only offer a limited response to program and outcome-based learning.

Program Outcome 1: To develop original thought on Canadian PR and CM through research, analysis, and teaching

Program Outcome 2: To articulate public relations and communications management as a distinct scholarly discipline

Program Outcome 3: To integrate knowledge and perspectives from multiple relevant disciplines to deepen and broaden understanding of public relations theory and practice

SECTION 5
CPRS Recognition of Education Programs

5.1 – CPRS Recognition of Education Programs

CPRS has worked with a few programs over the years to support PR and CM education. This recognition offers mutual benefits in that particular programs are appropriately acknowledged by a Canadian professional association and CPRS in turn can influence PR and CM program offerings.

With the establishment of the Pathways program, CPRS will partner with institutes whose programs effectively demonstrate all or most of the following or who demonstrate a strategy towards incorporating the following:

- Incorporation of Pathways program outcomes into those of the educational program and inclusion of performance measures into courses

- Incorporation of recommended content elements in program design

- Sound curriculum and program design

- A clear vision for the program

- A commitment from the institute for the PR program, which includes appropriate resourcing

- The professional accreditation of core faculty members or teaching instructors such as the APR designation

- Promotion of the CPRS annual National Conference and the Educators' Forum to teaching faculty

- Active consultation with CPRS on the Pathways program

- A commitment to five-year review cycles which will correspond with the endorsement timelines

Applications will be reviewed by the CPRS National Council on Education four times a year. CPRS recognition will be outlined in correspondence to the respective program and will be valid for a period of five years.

SECTION 6
Resources

6.1 – Instructing Faculty

Recognizing that institutes have their own processes in place for faculty qualifications and credentials, and that recognition for teaching excellence is the responsibility of institutes as employers, CPRS strongly recommends that instructors, professors, teachers, and faculty engaged in PR and CM instruction and teaching have professional accreditation as part of their credentials. Other designations are certainly respected; however for CPRS recognition of a program, efforts to incorporate the APR are recommended. This is especially the case for core faculty teaching in the PR discipline.

In addition, professional experience as a public relations practitioner or communications manager would add a real world context and understanding of issues that graduates will face.

Faculty with degrees and credentials at a post graduate level in PR and CM would be highly desirable by CPRS, though it is recognized that there are very few in Canada with such credentials.

6.2 – Faculty and Instructor Forums

Beginning in 2011, the CPRS annual National Conference will include an Educators' Forum for PR and CM faculty and instructors, where they can meet and discuss current issues in the classroom.

CPRS has introduced an educator's rate for National Conferences to encourage and support faculty attendance.

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Ce document est également disponible en français.