EP.27.059_FINAL
Approved by EP 10/26/2027

: PUBLIC RELATIONS, BS

In Workflow

1. U Program Review (eastuby@illinois.edu; mhazen@illinois.edu; bv4@illinois.edu; jswen@illinois.edu)
2. Gen Ed Review (menewell@illinois.edu)
3. 1408-ADV Committee Chair (keclark@illinois.edu; selasar@illinois.edu)
4. 1408-ADV Head (nelsonmr@illinois.edu)
5. KT Committee Chair (keclark@illinois.edu; joyallon@illinois.edu)
6. KT Dean (keclark@illinois.edu; tsulkin@illinois.edu)
7. University Librarian (clairest@illinois.edu; tteper@illinois.edu)
8. COTE Programs (suzannel@illinois.edu)
9. Provost (bsnewell@illinois.edu)
10. Senate EPC (bjlehman@illinois.edu;bsnewell@illinois.edu)
11. Senate (jtempel@illinois.edu;bjlehman@illinois.edu)
12. U Senate Conf (kakuntz@illinois.edu)
13. Board of Trustees (kakuntz@illinois.edu)
14. IBHE (kakuntz@illinois.edu)
15. HLC (kakuntz@illinois.edu)
16. Catalog Editor (bv4@illinois.edu; bsnewell@illinois.edu)
17. DMI (eastuby@illinois.edu; nnagy2@illinois.edu; bv4@illinois.edu; jswen@illinois.edu)

Approval Path

1. Tue, 14 Jul 2026 18:19:51 GMT
   Brianna Vargas-Gonzalez (bv4): Approved for U Program Review
2. Fri, 17 Jul 2026 19:57:23 GMT
   Melissa Steinkoenig (menewell): Approved for Gen Ed Review
3. Fri, 17 Jul 2026 22:53:33 GMT
   Sela Sar (selasar): Approved for 1408-ADV Committee Chair
4. Fri, 17 Jul 2026 22:53:55 GMT
   Michelle Nelson (nelsonmr): Approved for 1408-ADV Head
5. Mon, 14 Sep 2026 21:10:17 GMT
   Katie Clark (keclark): Approved for KT Committee Chair
6. Mon, 14 Sep 2026 21:10:47 GMT
   Katie Clark (keclark): Approved for KT Dean
7. Tue, 15 Sep 2026 00:04:55 GMT
   Tom Teper (tteper): Approved for University Librarian
8. Tue, 15 Sep 2026 00:13:51 GMT
   Suzanne Lee (suzannel): Approved for COTE Programs
9. Tue, 15 Sep 2026 18:12:50 GMT
   Brooke Newell (bsnewell): Rollback to KT Dean for Provost
10. Mon, 21 Sep 2026 20:30:08 GMT
    Katie Clark (keclark): Approved for KT Dean
11. Thu, 24 Sep 2026 14:37:42 GMT
    Tom Teper (tteper): Approved for University Librarian
12. Thu, 24 Sep 2026 14:56:29 GMT
    Suzanne Lee (suzannel): Approved for COTE Programs

13. Thu, 24 Sep 2026 15:14:37 GMT
    Brooke Newell (bsnewell): Approved for Provost

New Proposal

Date Submitted: Thu, 02 Jul 2026 22:57:23 GMT

Viewing: : Public Relations, BS

Last edit: Mon, 19 Oct 2026 17:44:18 GMT

Changes proposed by: Michelle Nelson

Proposal Type

Proposal Type:

Major (ex. Special Education)

Administration Details

Official Program Name

Public Relations, BS

Sponsor College

Media, College of

Sponsor Department

Advertising

Sponsor Name

Michelle Nelson

Sponsor Email

nelsonmr@illinois.edu

College Contact

Katie Clark

College Contact Email

keclark@illinois.edu

College Budget Officer

Dinah Stillwell

College Budget Officer Email

ddanielk@illinois.edu

If additional stakeholders other than the Sponsor and College Contacts listed above should be contacted if questions during the review process arise, please list them here.

Does this program have inter-departmental administration?

No

Catalog Term

Desired Effective Catalog Term

Fall 2027

Effective Catalog

2027-2028

Proposal Title

Proposal Title (either Establish/Revise/Eliminate the Degree Name in Program Name in the College of XXXX, i.e., Establish the Bachelor of Science in Entomology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, include the Graduate College for Grad Programs)

Establish the Bachelor of Science in Public Relations in the College of Media

Are there other related proposals that should be considered simultaneously with this one? If yes, please list the program keys and/or titles. Consider Majors, Minors, Concentrations & Joint Programs in your department. Please know that this information is used administratively to move related proposals through workflow efficiently and together as needed. Format your response like the following "This BS proposal (key 567) is related to the Concentration A proposal (key 145)"

No

Program Justification

Provide a brief justification of the program, including highlights of the program objectives, and the careers, occupations, or further educational opportunities for which the program will prepare graduates, when appropriate.

The proposed Bachelor of Science in Public Relations responds to the growing demand for skilled communication professionals in an increasingly interconnected, media-driven, and reputation-sensitive global environment. Organizations across the public, private, and non-profit sectors require strategic communication specialists who can manage stakeholder relationships, shape public perception, respond to crises, and leverage digital platforms effectively. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of public relations specialists is projected to grow 5 percent from 2024 to 2034, faster than the average for all occupations.

The expansion of digital media ecosystems, data-driven communication strategies, globalized markets, and heightened public accountability has significantly increased the need for professionally trained public relations practitioners. Establishing this undergraduate program will address workforce gaps, support industry needs, and align with national and international trends in communication, corporate governance, public affairs, and brand management.

A Public Relations certificate was launched in 2011-2012. Due to its popularity, a Public Relations Minor was launched in 2016. Since 2021, 468 students have earned a Public Relations Minor, and there are currently 255 students enrolled in the program. There appears to be sufficient demand for a major.

The program aligns with labor market demands and offers new career paths for our students, supports institutional growth, and enhances the university's academic portfolio in professional media degrees.

Program Objectives
1. Develop students' understanding of public relations theories, concepts, principles, models, and historical development.
2. Equip students with strategic planning and public relations campaign development, including the design, implementation, and evaluation of PR campaigns.
3. Build professional competencies in writing, oral presentations, media relations, digital communication, and content creation.
4. Develop students' ability to effectively collaborate within diverse teams to design and deliver strategic and engaging content and presentations.
5. Foster ethical decision-making and socially responsible communication practices.
6. Apply critical thinking and problem-solving in public relations cases.
7. To educate students to critically understand rapidly evolving media environments and to develop the ability to design and implement effective public relations strategies for various stakeholders.

The Public Relations major is 124 credits to maintain consistency with other residential bachelors degrees within the College of Media.

Instructional Resources

Will there be any reduction in other course offerings, programs or concentrations by your department as a result of this new program/ proposed change?

No

Does this new program/proposed change result in the replacement of another program?

No

Does the program include other courses/subjects outside of the sponsoring department impacted by the creation/revision of this program?

Yes

Please email the Department Head or a CIM User in the Department Head role of the units that own the courses that are impacted by the creation/revision/phase down or elimination of this program. For example, if you are adding a course, you will need support from the course owning unit to do so. Likewise, if you are removing a course or adding additional courses where enrollment in existing courses in the program of study could be impacted, you will need acknowledgement from the course owning unit. If the program has potential for perceived overlap with another unit on campus, you should have consultation with the other unit/stakeholders. Once this is complete, acknowledge that you have done so below.

Acknowledged

Indicate which departments/units/stakeholders were notified/consulted by listing the name of the department(s). For example, if you are adding a course owned by the Department of Philosophy and a course owned by the Department of Theatre and notified the units accordingly, you would include in the box below: 1. Department of Philosophy; 2. Department of Theatre.

1. Department of Journalism
2. Department of Media and Cinema Studies
3. College of Media supports the inclusion of MDIA 100

Please attach any letters of support/acknowledgement for any Instructional Resources. Consider faculty, students, and/or other impacted units as appropriate.

Letter of Support Journalism for PR Major_Spring 2026.pdf
MACS_support letter for PR Major _Spring 2026.pdf

Program Features

Academic Level

Undergraduate

Does this major have transcripted concentrations?

No

What is the longest/maximum time to completion of this program?

8 semesters

What are the minimum Total Credit Hours required for this program?

124

CIP Code

090902 - Public Relations/Image Management.

SOC Code(s) (Should be completed only for Certificates:)

Does this program prepare graduates for entry into a career or profession that is regulated by the State of Illinois?

No

Program of Study

Provide detailed information (course rubrics, numbers, and credit hours) of how a student could obtain 40 credit hours of upper-division coursework.

ADV 310 - 3 hours (required course)
ADV 350 - 3 hours (required course)
ADV 410 - 3 hours (required course)
ADV 420 - 3 hours (required course)
Advanced Electives in PR (Choose 5 courses from ADV 301, ADV 314, ADV 480, ADV 491, JOUR 360, JOUR 453, MACS 463)- 15 hours
With 43 hours of free electives available to students

Attach Program of Study related information here.

SampleSequence_PR_CIM_FA27.docx

Catalog Page Text - Overview Tab

Catalog Page Overview Text

The Bachelor of Science in Public Relations prepares students to become strategic, ethical, and adaptive communication professionals in an interconnected and evolving global media landscape. Balancing foundational knowledge with immersive, hands-on experiences, this program equips students to manage relationships, build brand identities, and navigate complex informational challenges across corporate, non-profit, and agency settings.

Statement for Programs of Study Catalog

Graduation Requirements

Minimum hours required for graduation: 124 hours.

University Requirements

Minimum of 40 hours of upper-division coursework, generally at the 300- or 400-level. These hours can be drawn from all elements of the degree. Students should consult their academic advisor for additional guidance in fulfilling this requirement.

The university and residency requirements can be found in the Student Code (https://studentcode.illinois.edu/article3/part8/3-801/) (§ 3-801) and in the Academic Catalog (http://catalog.illinois.edu/general-information/degree-general-education-requirements/).

General Education Requirements

Follows the campus General Education (Gen Ed) requirements (https://courses.illinois.edu/gened/DEFAULT/DEFAULT/). Some Gen Ed requirements may be met by courses required and/or electives in the program.

Code	Title	Hours
Composition I		4-6
Advanced Composition		3
Humanities & the Arts (6 hours)		6
Natural Sciences & Technology (6 hours)		6
Social & Behavioral Sciences (6 hours)		6
Cultural Studies: Non-Western Cultures (1 course)		3
Cultural Studies: US Minority Cultures (1 course)		3
Cultural Studies: Western/Comparative Cultures (1 course)		3

Quantitative Reasoning (2 courses, at least one course must be Quantitative Reasoning I)		6-10
Language Requirement (Completion of the third semester or equivalent of a language other than English is required)		0-15
Code	**Title**	**Hours**
College Orientation		
MDIA 100	College of Media Orientation	1
Required Major Courses		**12**
ADV 310	Intro to Public Relations	3
ADV 350	Writing for Public Relations	3
ADV 410	Public Relations Strategies	3
ADV 420	Public Relations Campaigns	3
Topic Electives for Public Relations		
Select three of the following:		8-10
ADV 150	Introduction to Advertising	
ADV 175	Introduction to Multicultural Advertising	
ADV 201	Social Media and Personal Branding	
ADV 223	Advertising Design and Creative Direction	
ADV 290	Special Topics in Advertising	
ADV 214	Sports Advertising & Branding	
ADV 391	Creative Advertising for Non-Majors	
ADV 494	Persuasion Consumer Response	
JOUR 150	Introduction to Mobile Journalism	
JOUR 200	Introduction to Journalism	
JOUR 210	Newsgathering Across Platforms	
JOUR 250	Journalism Ethics & Diversity	
Advanced Electives in Public Relations		
Select five of the following:		15
ADV 301	Becoming an Influencer	
ADV 314	Sports Public Relations	
ADV 480	Social Media Analytics	
ADV 491	Digital Content and Social Media Management	
JOUR 360	Working with the Press	
JOUR 453	Crisis Communications	
MACS 463	Public Relations and the Entertainment Industry	

Corresponding Degree

BS Bachelor of Science

Program Regulation and Assessment

Plan to Assess and Improve Student Learning

Illinois Administrative Code: 1050.30(b)(1)(D) Provision is made for guidance and counseling of students, evaluations of student performance, continuous monitoring of progress of students toward their degree objectives and appropriate academic record keeping.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

1. Analyze foundational public relations theories, concepts, models, and historical developments to diagnose modern communication challenges.
2. Formulate and implement comprehensive public relations campaigns, including the design, execution, and data-driven evaluation of strategic outcomes.
3. Produce and deliver professional written, oral, and multimedia content tailored to diverse media channels and organizational goals.
4. Collaborate within diverse teams to co-create and deliver strategic communications and stakeholder presentations.
5. Evaluate complex communication scenarios using ethical frameworks and social responsibility principles to guide communication decision-making.
6. Deconstruct real-world public relations case studies to identify organizational vulnerabilities and strategic successes.
7. Design and implement strategic communication initiatives to build, manage, and sustain positive relationships within an organization, between organizations, and with their various publics.

Program Description and Requirements Attach Documents

Delivery Method

This program is available:

On Campus - Students are required to be on campus, they may take some online courses.

Admission Requirements

Provide a brief narrative description of the admission requirements for this program. Where relevant, include information about licensure requirements, student background checks, GRE and TOEFL scores, and admission requirements for transfer students.

The program is open to first-year and transfer students as well as on-campus intercollegiate transfer (ICT) and those applying for re-entry to the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.
First year and transfer applicants should demonstrate interest in the major through their applications, including in their short answers and previous experiences.
Transfer applicants should have a minimum college GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
TOEFL scores should be a minimum of 100.

Enrollment

Number of Students in Program (estimate)

Year One Estimate

10

5th Year Estimate (or when fully implemented)

100

Estimated Annual Number of Degrees Awarded

Year One Estimate

0

5th Year Estimate (or when fully implemented)

50

What is the matriculation term for this program?

Spring/Summer/Other

Please give an explanation of what matriculation term(s) can be used for this program and why.

Students will be able to start the major in fall, spring, and summer terms.

Budget

Will the program or revision require staffing (faculty, advisors, etc.) beyond what is currently available?

No

Additional Budget Information

Recruitment of new students, delivery of instruction, and academic and career advising can all be accomplished with the College of Media's current staffing structure. If the major grows beyond expectations, the College would hire additional FTE to support the program.

Attach File(s)

Financial Resources

What tuition rate do you expect to charge for this program? e.g, Undergraduate Base Tuition, or Engineering Differential, or Social Work Online (no dollar amounts necessary)

Media Differential

Attach letters and self-supporting documents as applicable

Institutional Context

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Describe the historical and university context of the program's development. Include a short summary of any existing program(s) upon which this program will be built.

Explain the nature and degree of overlap with existing programs and, if such overlap exists, document consultation with the impacted program's home department(s).

A Public Relations certificate was launched in 2011-2012. Due to its popularity, a Public Relations Minor was launched in 2016. Since 2021, 468 students have earned a Public Relations Minor, and there are currently 255 students enrolled in the program. There appears to be sufficient demand for a major.

This program offers a new undergraduate degree in Public Relations, administered by the Charles H. Sandage Department of Advertising with elective courses being offered from the other units in the College of Media: the Department of Journalism, and the Department of Media & Cinema Studies.
Students in the BS in Public Relations will enroll in courses that are also offered to students in the departments' Bachelor of Science majors (in Advertising, CS+ Advertising, Journalism, and Media & Cinema Studies), but the focus of the degrees differs significantly, with the Public Relations degree offering focused study of public relations and preparation for careers in that industry.

Accordingly, the Public Relations degree is a distinct degree and will provide a unique education different from those programs already available in the College of Media. There is a Public Relations minor, which has demonstrated interest in this profession. Public Relations is a unique degree with a distinct field of study as evidenced by academic journals (e.g., Journal of Public Relations Research) and a professional organization spanning almost 80 years (Public Relations Society Society of America).

If letters of support are available attach them here:

Program Support

Provide a brief description of the support for this program, including the financial, faculty, space, advisors/staff. Discuss plans to acquire any additional support that will be needed. If new or additional facilities or significant improvements to already existing facilities is needed, describe the Facility Need, Year 1 and 5 cost, and any other applicable notes.

There is no need for additional financial, faculty, space or staff for the program.

The courses in the PR major are already being taught by current faculty. The academic advising staff are able to handle the potential increase in students. And there is no need for additional space or improvements to existing facilities.

Attach any supporting documents as applicable.

Library Resources

Describe your proposal's impact on the University Library's resources, collections, and services. If necessary please consult with the appropriate disciplinary specialist within the University Library.

The proposed degree should have no impact on the University Library's resources, collections, or services. We are not adding any additional courses. The Communication Library already serves the students enrolled in the classes. The proposal team consulted with Lisa Romero in the Communication Library, and, based upon their input, determined that the Library's resources, collections, and services are sufficient to meet the needs of the program outlined in this proposal.

HLC Section

Credit Hours

Existing or repackaged curricula (Courses from existing inventory of courses):

Number of Credit Hours:

38

Percent of Total:

100

Revised or redesigned curricula (Courses for which content has been revised for the new program):

Number of Credit Hours:

0

Percent of Total:

0

New curricula (Courses developed for the new program that have never been offered):

Number of Credit Hours:

0

Percent of Total:

0

Total Credit Hours of the Program:

Number of Credit Hours:

38

Percent of Total:

100

EP Documentation

EP Control Number

EP.27.059

Attach Rollback/Approval Notices

ep27059_responsse from sponsor_20201016.pdf

Non-EP Documentation

U Program Review Comments

Rollback Documentation and Attachment

DMI Documentation

Attach Final Approval Notices

Banner/Codebook Name

Program Code:

Minor Code
Conc Code
Degree Code
Major Code

Senate Approval Date

Senate Conference Approval Date

BOT Approval Date

IBHE Approval Date

HLC Approval Date

DOE Approval Date

Effective Date:

Program Reviewer Comments

Emily Stuby (eastuby) (Tue, 14 Jul 2026 15:36:59 GMT): Updated the official program name to match data standards.
Melissa Steinkoenig (menewell) (Fri, 17 Jul 2026 19:57:21 GMT): Gen Ed Table: Good
Brooke Newell (bsnewell) (Tue, 15 Sep 2026 18:12:50 GMT): Rollback: Per discussion with Katie C.

Key: 1417