Public Relations (MA)

This program is offered by the School of Communications.

Program Description

The master of arts (MA) degree in public relations is intended for students who have an interest in public relations.

The degree balances the practical application of public relations skills with the theory that informs the field. The program will give students insights into how entrepreneurship, ethical frameworks, and globalization provide key components shaping the current practice of public relations. The program is designed to give students the insights necessary to pursue a career in public relations or a related field.

This program is offered online, at the St. Louis home campus, and at select U.S. campuses. Please see the Campus Locations section of this catalog for a list of campuses where this program is offered.

Learning Outcomes

Successful graduates of this program will be able to:

• Design and perform public relations research and understand research findings in order to solve an organization's communications problems.
• Demonstrate strategic-level analysis and critical thinking with an understanding of the effects of globalization and while following ethical models.
• Review trends and anticipate implications for future communications needs and challenges.
• Develop an understanding of how entrepreneurship, team-building, and leadership affect the practice of public relations.

Program Curriculum

The 36 credit hours required for the MA in public relations must include the following courses:

Core Courses (27 credit hours)

• MEDC 5000 Media Communications (Requisite Course) (3 hours)
• MEDC 5310 Media and Culture (3 hours)
• PBRL 5322 Public Relations (3 hours)
• PBRL 5342 Writing for Public Relations (3 hours)
  or PBRL 5344 Speech Writing (3 hours)
• MEDC 5350 Media Organization and Regulations (3 hours)
• MEDC 5360 International Communications (3 hours)
• PBRL 5380 Strategic Communication Applications (3 hours)
• MEDC 5460 Media Research (3 hours)
• MEDC 6000 Seminar in Media Communications (3 hours)

Elective Courses

A minimum of 9 credit hours must be completed from the following:

• ADVT 5321 Advertising Decision-Making (special prerequisites) (3 hours)
• MEDC 5300 Strategic Communications (3 hours)
• MEDC 5345 Writing for Media Communications: Journalism (3 hours)
• MEDC 5400 Media Production Management (3 hours)
• MEDC 5500 Professional Seminars (1-3 hours)
• MEDC 5550 Topics in Media Communications (3-6 hours)
• MEDC 5560 Introduction to Interactive Communications (3 hours)
• NPRO 5100 Written Storytelling (3 hours)
• PBRL 5323 Organizational Communications (3 hours)

• PBRL 5342 Writing for Public Relations (if not used as a core course) (3 hours)
• PBRL 5344 Speech Writing (if not used as a core course) (3 hours)
• PBRL 5451 Communication Strategies for Investors and Financial Stakeholders (3 hours)
• PBRL 5452 Communication Strategies for Public Affairs and Government Relations (3 hours)
• PBRL 5453 Crisis Management Strategies for Nonprofit Organizations (3 hours)
• PBRL 5465 Crisis Management Communications (3 hours)
• PBRL 5550 Topics in Public Relations (3-6 hours)
• PBRL 5770 Multinational Public Relations (3 hours)

Students may substitute appropriate 4000-level courses for electives in this program with the approval of the student’s advisor and the director of Graduate Studies for the School of Communications.

All students entering this program are required to consult with a School of Communications academic advisor to create a program plan to chart progress through the curriculum in this degree program.

The required and elective courses listed may be taken as directed studies, subject to the conditions stated in the Directed Studies section listed under Academic Policies and Procedures and approved by the director of Graduate Studies and the dean of the School of Communications.

Admission

Students who are interested in applying to this degree program should see the Admission Section of this catalog for general requirements.

Send all admission materials to:

Office of Admissions
Webster University
470 E. Lockwood Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63119

Advancement to Candidacy

Students are admitted to their graduate program upon completion of all admission requirements. Students are advanced to candidacy status after successfully completing 12 credit hours of graduate credit, with grades of B– or better. In the MBA program and other specialized programs, courses required as prerequisites to the program do not count toward the 12 credit hours required for advancement. A student who receives one F or two C’s before advancement is dismissed. Students admitted on a conditional basis into the School of Business and Technology, the College of Arts & Sciences, or the School of Communications are limited to taking one course per term. Such students who earn one grade of C or below before they are advanced to candidacy will be dismissed without further right to appeal for reinstatement but may apply for readmission after one calendar year from the date of dismissal. Exceptions for international students may apply.