Revised (10/24/02)
New Program Proposal - Letter of Intent

The Letter of Intent provides a short description of the program concept and rationale for initial internal review. Once the program is approved successfully by the internal curriculum committees, and if required, approval by the Council on Postsecondary Education, the program is approved in principal for the academic stage. However, prior to implementation, the program must also have financial approval of required resources, approval by the Provost, approval by the President, and the Board of Regents.

Answer the following questions as accurately as possible.

* **Program Title**: Public Relations

* **Degree Earned**: Baccalaureate

* **Federal CIP Code**: CIP 09

* **Proposing Department**: Department of Communication

* **Inside/Outside NKU's Band of Authority**: Inside

* **Degree Earned**: Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations (Baccalaureate)

* **Program Description**:

The proposed Public Relations major program is an interdisciplinary study of communication fundamentals, principles, skills, and processes. An undergraduate major in Public Relations will be a College of Professional Studies major with most of its curriculum offered by professors of Journalism, Radio-Television, and Speech Communication, although it will also supplemented by courses in the Departments of Literature and Language, Sociology, Marketing, and Management. This interdisciplinary program will prepare students for a variety of career and leadership opportunities in the public relations industry. Career opportunities in public relations currently abound in profit and non-profit agencies in the metropolitan region and across the globe. Program objectives will prepare our students for the various demands associated with the field of Public Relations.

* **Description of New Courses being Proposed**:

  1. **PRE 410**: Electronic Public Relations is a course designed to expose students to the various forms of electronic media used for corporate, non-broadcast purposes, while preparing students to be able to develop, create, and produce effective electronic programming for distribution within the corporate culture. Topics covered in this course will include: forms of electronic P.R., modes of television production, copyright laws, production process, budgeting a production, contract/freelance/independent producers, consumer/industrial/professional video, off-line and on-line editing, professional organizations, and audience targeting. Through readings, guest lectures and applied projects, students will demonstrate their understanding of
Electronic Public Relations (Prerequisites: RTV/JOU 100, SPE 220 and advanced writing course (PRE 410, ENG 340, JOU 346, or ENG 391). This course has been taught successfully as a Special Topics course, submitted by Dr. Cady Short-Thompson.

2. JOU 492: Mass Communications Research Methods: Methods of conducting, interpreting, and reporting research relating to mass communications, mass media, public relations, and advertising (PREREQS: JOU 130 or SPE 220). This course is a title and number change from the Precision Journalism course, submitted by Dr. Brad Scharlott.

3. PRE 376: P.R. Writing: Introduction to various forms of writing for Public Relations, including press releases, annual reports, newsletter, and other professional public relations writing for the media and the public (PREREQS: RTV 100/JOU 100, and JOU 130 or RTV 265, and PRE 375). This is a new course submitted by Dr. Cady Short-Thompson.

4. PRE 375: Principles of Public Relations: Philosophy and functions of public relations practices; campaign planning and public affairs activities; writing messages for and selection of news media (PREREQS: JOU 100, JOU 230, or consent of instructor). This course is a prefix change from JOU 375 to PRE 375 only, submitted by Dr. Cady Short-Thompson.

5. PRE 377: Public Relations Case Studies and Campaigns: Evaluation of public relations programs conducted by companies, non-profit institutions, and government agencies; students will write for specialized and mass media in public relations (PREREQ: PRE 375). This course is a prefix change from JOU 377 to PRE 377 only, submitted by Dr. Cady Short-Thompson.

6. PRE 296: Public Relations Practicum: Academically supervised and evaluated professional experience in public relations on or off campus. A maximum of 6 semester hours of practicum is applicable toward the major in public relations (PREREQS: JOU 130, PRE 375, PRE 376, or consent of instructor). This new course submitted by Dr. Cady Short-Thompson.

7. PRE 396: Public Relations Internship: Selected placement, for Public Relations majors, in a public relations agency, department, or other employer of P.R. professionals. Assigned work in a business, non-profit or government organization may include writing, production, or promotion. This course may not be repeated for credit. PREREQ: 1 semester hour of Public Relations Practicum (PRE 296) and consent of supervising faculty. This new course submitted by Dr. Cady Short-Thompson.

8. PRE 499: Independent Study in Public Relations: This new course is a forum for individually supervised work involving reading, research, writing and/or production in a specified area of interest in public relations. Topic and plan of study are to be selected before registration in conference with professor (PREREQS: Junior standing or consent of instructor). This new course submitted by Dr. Cady Short-Thompson
Department or Major Goals - Answer the following questions:
What are the educational goals for the proposed program?

Our main goal is to create an academic program that provides students with the necessary concepts, theories, skills, and practice to successfully enter the Public Relations (P.R.) field. This program responds to a need for a distinct P.R. program of study at Northern Kentucky University. Currently, Public Relations is only an area of emphasis or track in our Journalism program. A Public Relations major will strengthen the curriculum, enhance student recruitment and retention, and lead graduates to gainful employment in the field. We do not propose a minor in Public Relations at this time.

Our Public Relations students will gain a thorough understanding of the following:
1. Fundamental knowledge of contemporary mass media forums and its history, communication concepts, and business practices.
2. Principles of Public Relations and related fields of study and employment.
3. Research Methods and Applications.
4. Advanced and Diverse Writing Skills which include technological proficiency (Internet, websites, software, electronic P.R. writing, desktop publishing, etc.).
5. Advanced Communication Skills (speech communication, interpersonal, and organizational communication)
6. Ethical principles and Legal issues in Public Relations
7. Applied Research and Practical Experience in Public Relations

How do the goals for this new program relate to the mission of the University?

Numerous links exist between the proposed P.R. program and the University’s mission. These links include:

1. We would satisfy our goal of learner-centered education by better serving our undergraduate student population who desire a Public Relations major but have no affordable alternative programs in the metropolitan region to attend.

2. This program will also encourage a special convergence among the divisions of JOU, RTV, and SPE in the Department of Communication as well as an opportunity for increased scholarship and a greater sense of collegiality, collaboration, and interconnectness within the Department. This program will create an environment that is rich for collaboration among faculty of the several disciplines on campus which is another core value.

3. This program will also serve and reach out to the public and the business community as the proposal features a required internship or practicum within a regional organization. The University has also indicated a preference for the expansion of co-op and internship opportunities for students which benefit their education but also serve the organizations with whom they partner with in the business community. Such civic involvement will enhance the student’s learning via public engagement.
4. Additionally, the University has expressed interest in interdisciplinarity in its programming which certainly characterizes this proposed major as it is a blend or hybrid of the disciplines of Communication.

5. This new program will also achieve the core value of academic excellence in that its curriculum will have a greater depth and focus in Public Relations than is currently offered within our University and in the metropolitan region.

6. This program is anticipated to strengthen our undergraduate offerings and increase our enrollment figures.

7. This major will strengthen our technological use and create more learner-centered delivery forums via the web and distance learning technologies, as well as offer various and conveniently scheduled course offerings.

* Statement of Need - Provide detail on the following:
Include information on projected student clientele and how this proposed program will attract students to NKU. A formal need analysis required - see on-line form "Needs Analysis:

We were informed that a formal need analysis would not be required as this program is largely based on courses that already exist in our three disciplines of Communication (JOU, RTV, and SPE). This new P.R. program is a hybrid of our three existing disciplines which focuses much more specifically on a specific and intentional curriculum aimed at producing well-educated and prepared public relations experts.

Similar Programs in Area - (If similar programs exist, list where and how your projected major is unique.):

No identical program in Public Relations exists in the entire metropolitan region. Within the Consortium, Xavier University (a highly selective, expensive, and out-of-state private institution), Murray State University, and the University of Kentucky offer a Public Relations Program. The University of Cincinnati only hosts a Professional Certificate in Public Relations (not a major program) in their College of Evening and Continuing Education.

Like the Department of Communication’s other majors (JOU, RTV and SPE), this new major program in Public Relations will be both academic and applied. Students will receive a solid grounding in the principles of Public Relations and these will be complemented by a focus on praxis. Our graduates will have a strong educational background to draw on as they enter the field to practice.

Proposed Options: N/A
Career opportunities for graduates of a Public Relations program are strong. The best estimate, based on yellow pages listings and membership lists of local communication organizations, is that there are 50 companies that can be described as public relations firms with offices in Greater Cincinnati. Some offer only limited and specialized services, e.g. special event planning, news release distribution, or newsletter editing. Others are full-service public relations firms that handle everything from research and public relations planning through the production and dissemination of messages to the subsequent evaluation of campaign communication effectiveness.

Firms that do only public relations—as distinguished from advertising agencies and marketing firms that do public relations as one aspect of offering broader and more comprehensive communications services—range in size from one-person entrepreneurships such as JSL Public Relations operated by Julie Steers or Triad Communications run by Mev Wilson which service two or three local clients at any given time up to Dan Pinger Public Relations, Inc. whose 16 full-time professionals typically work with 35 or more clients at a time.

Determining the total number of practitioners is a difficult task and is somewhat more likely to be inaccurate than projecting the number of firms. However, the membership lists of the major communication organizations are one way to start.

- The local chapters of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) have an unduplicated total of 228 non-student members who identify themselves as public relations practitioners. However, many other public relations people choose not to join either of these organizations. Some are not “joiners” and others join professional organizations with more specialized interests.

- The Cincinnati Editors Association (CEA), for instance, reports that 35 of its 183 members list public relations as their primary work, and 43 of the 145 local members of Women in Communication, Inc. (WICI) consider themselves public relations practitioners.

- The local chapters of the Society for Professional Journalists (SPJ), the International Television Association (ITVA), and the American Management Association (AMA), as well as the Cincinnati Ad Club, also report “a few” members who are primarily public relations practitioners.

Discounting those with multiple memberships, there are roughly 285 Cincinnati public relations practitioners who belong to at least one local communication organization. The general consensus gleaned from talking to dozens of Cincinnati public relations people is that there are at least twice as many practitioners who are not members of these professional organizations as there are members. This is probably a very conservative estimate given national statistics which suggest a ratio approaching 5 to 1 based on a comparison of U.S. Census data and U.S. Labor Department projections of more than 120,000 public relations practitioners in the United States with PRSA and IABC’s combined
Using the conservative Cincinnati estimate of a 2-to-1 ratio of non-members to members, the total number of public relations people in Greater Cincinnati can be projected as about 850. Cincinnati’s largest concentration of public relations people (over 20 percent according to the surveys) is employed in the medical and health care field. Each of the area’s more than 30 hospitals employ at least one public relations person—some have more than a half-dozen—and so do the dozens of medical labs, physicians groups, and drug companies. The second largest concentration of public relations people (almost 15 percent) are those employed by non-profit organizations and trade associations. This includes social service providers, traditional charities, museums, and special committees and organizations set up to manage specific festivals and events such as the “Tall Stacks” riverboat reunion, the “Fine Arts Sampler Weekend,” or “Summer Fair.” The third largest concentration of practitioners (also nearly 15 percent) includes those who work for public relations and other communication counseling firms. Finally, larger firms such as Procter and Gamble have in-house Public Relations departments as well.

*Report arrangements that are in place to offer all or part of this program through KYVU or other distance learning methods. If no plans are in place, please describe plans to do so or explain why this is not appropriate for this program. (A response is required in order to post this proposal.):

Public Relations Principles and Public Relations Cases are already web-enhanced; Web-enhanced Public Relations Internships will be offered; Public Relations Principles, and P.R. Cases will be available through KYVU; and Electronic Public Relations may be taken on-line via Western Kentucky University.

* Faculty Requirements - Answer the following questions:
What are the faculty requirements for this new program?
Can your present departmental faculty teach and administer this major, or will additional faculty be needed?
If additional faculty required, how many?
List both full-time and part-time and estimated salary requirements.
Do the areas of expertise of the present faculty relate to the projected curriculum or do present faculty need to be retrained?

Additional Faculty Requirements:
1. One New Full-time tenure-track Public Relations professor ($42,000 base salary)
2. Part-time adjunct instructors 6 sections per year ($1,700 per class=$10,200)

Although faculty in various disciplines at NKU would teach in the program, the current organizational resources in the Department of Communication will not allow reallocation of time devoted solely to the Public Relations Program. The Communication faculty teach four courses per semester that fill to 96% class capacity (97.8% as of August 27, 2002), compared to 81% university-wide. The Department of
Communication is clearly stretched as they attempt to manage the demand for our courses. In fact, the Department of Communication total number of majors has grown from 354 majors in 1995 to 569 majors in 2002, which constitutes a 60.7% increase with only two new faculty lines (JOU & SPE) to support such growth. Despite these two added positions, the department has had to utilize 2-4 full-time temporaries every year since 1990.

The demand for our courses is even greater when one considers the large number of minors who go undocumented or unaccounted for by the University. Our figures do not count those students who are double majors either, as the first recorded major is what is represented in statistical data on major counts.

The need for part-time faculty is estimated to be 6 sections per year. It is projected that with the hiring of a new full-time faculty member teaching 8 courses per year, 6 additional part time sections per year would be necessary, totaling 14 new sections taught by new or additional faculty.

**The Newly Hired Assistant Professor of Public Relations would teach:**

*Fall*
- JOU 321 (4 hours)
- JOU 321 (4 hours)
- JOU 346 (4 hours)

*Spring*
- JOU 432 (3 hours)
- JOU 432 (3 hours)
- JOU 377 (3 hours)
- JOU 375 (3 hours)

**The Part-time Instructors would teach:**

*Fall*
- RTV/JOU 100 (3 hours)
- JOU 130 (3 hours)
- RTV 265 (3 hours)

*Spring*
- RTV/JOU 100 (3 hours)
- RTV 265 (3 hours)
- SPE 220 (3 hours)

In addition to the student and industry demand, the program builds on the expertise of a number of current faculty at NKU, including (but not limited to) the following:

1. Dr. Michael Turney currently teaches Principles of Public Relations (JOU 375) and Public Relations Case Studies and Campaigns (JOU 377). Dr. Turney is active in the International
Association of Business Communicators at both the local and international level and does consulting for museums, government, and non-profit human services agencies.

2. Dr. Bradford Scharlott currently teaches Desktop Publishing and Mass Communication Research Methods, which are critical to a Public Relations Program.

3. Professor J. Patrick Moynahan, Interim Dean of Professional Studies, teaches courses in news writing and is co-author of a published a text on Sport Public Relations and has taught numerous courses in writing.

4. Dr. Penelope Summers teaches *JOU* 385 Law of Mass Communication and has taught the introduction Public Relations course.

5. Dr. J. Gaut Ragsdale teaches SPE 603 (A graduate course in Business Communication) and SPE 303 (Organizational Communication) and has conducted research in public relations, specifically in corporate governance and shareholder relations.

6. Professor Russell Jenisch teaches Electronic PR as a prototype or Special Topics course. Professor Jenisch has extensive professional experience in video production and direction, such as sporting events, documentaries and educational productions.

7. Dr. Cady Short-Thompson teaches SPE 330 (Political Campaign Communication), which includes the public relations and publicity functions found in campaigns, and SPE 340 (Strategies of Persuasion).

8. Professor Chris Stroebel has extensive electronic media and media on the internet (such as streaming video and audio, flash and other vector-based animation formats, and DVD), and has created public relations videos for profit and non-profit organizations.

9. Dr. Linda Welker teaches Public Relations Writing (PRE 376) and is an active member of the Public Relations Society of America.

* Resources Required - (Describe the estimated cost of resources required for the proposed new program/major. Include space, equipment, library resources, operational budget, advertising, and staff support.

Are these resources already available or do they need to be purchased?

Is outside funding available for purchase of equipment, books, or other materials?

First, we will need ¼ reassigned time (one course release) for a Public Relations Program Coordinator to administer the program.

To start in the Fall, 2003, this proposed new program would require one new faculty member to teach
the courses and supervise the internship program. Approximately $2,000 worth of books are needed to create a sufficient P.R. library to begin the program with some additional orders placed each year to bolster the collection. There is a possibility that this cost could be absorbed by the Department’s present library materials budget over a two-year period. Additional resource requirements (e.g., space, staff support) include additional office space and office equipment for the one new faculty member. Otherwise, there are minimal additions to expenses associated with the staff support and operating costs.

First Year Estimated Expenditures:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Assistant Professor (Base Salary)</td>
<td>$42,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fringes per avg. salary (18.25% or $7,665 + $3,360 for health and dental)</td>
<td>$11,025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost of FTEF</td>
<td>$53,025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part-time Faculty, 6 @ $1,700 per course</td>
<td>$10,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary Support</td>
<td>Handled by existing structure within the Dept of Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library Resources</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL PERSONNEL COSTS</td>
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Operating Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postage, Printing, and Supplies</td>
<td>500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel &amp; Prof. Development</td>
<td>1,350</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Operating Costs</td>
<td>$1,850</td>
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TOTAL EXPENDITURES $66,575

* Major Curriculum and Course Analysis -

The proposed Public Relations major is designed to prepare students for entry-level positions in the field of Public Relations. To achieve the new program’s goals, the proposed curriculum is shown below. This curriculum was unanimously approved by the Faculty in the Department of Communication in August 22, 2002. Initially, there will not be admission standards or entrance requirements in addition to the University’s standards or the already existing admission standards in certain courses (ie: JOU 130).
The curriculum below was unanimously approved at the August 22, 2002 faculty meeting of the Department of Communication. The curriculum was designed to create a P.R. program of excellence as well as accommodate accreditation goals and guidelines of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC).

Fundamentals:
1. JOU 100/RTV 100 Contemporary Mass Media (3 credit hours)
2. SPE 220 Interpersonal Communication (3 credit hours)
3. MGT 205 Intro. To Business and Management (3 credit hours) or SPE 303 Organizational Communication (3 credit hours) =9

Principles:
4. JOU 375** (PRE 375) Principles of Public Relations (3 credit hours)
5. JOU 385 Law of Mass Communication (3 credit hours)
6. MKT 305 Principles of Marketing (3 credit hours) or RTV 308 Broadcast Sales & Advertising (3 credit hours)
7. SPE 340 Strategies of Persuasion (3 credit hours) or JOU 370 Advertising (3 credit hours) =12

Skills:
8. JOU 130 Newswriting (3 credit hours) or RTV 265 Broadcast Newswriting (3 credit hours) =3

9. PRE 376 PR Writing* (3 credit hours) or ENG 340 Business Writing (3 credit hours) or JOU 346 Copy Editing (4 credit hours) or ENG 391 Persuasive Writing (3 credit hours) =3 or 4

One course from:
10. JOU 321 Publication Skills (4 credit hours) or Electronic PR * (3 credit hours) or SPE 370 Advanced Public Speaking (3 credit hours) =3 or 4

11. JOU 492 Mass Communications Research Methods* =3

Application:
12. JOU 377** (PRE 377) PR Case Studies and Campaigns (3 credit hours) =3

One course from:
13. Applied Experiential Credit via a
   PRE 396* Public Relations Internship (1-3 credit hours, with a 1 hour prerequisite in a practicum) or
   PRE 499* Independent Study in Public Relations (3 credit hours) or
   PRE 296* P.R. Practicum (3 credit hours) =3

TOTAL CREDIT HOURS=39-41

*New courses to be developed
**Course changed to PRE (Public Relations Prefix)

*All courses listed above are currently taught in the Departments of Communication, Marketing, Management, Sociology and Literature and Language except those marked with an asterisk. These two courses will be new courses developed and taught by the Department of Communication. This copy reflects changes made to the proposal and unanimously approved at the August 22, 2002 faculty meeting of the Department of Communication.
This program relies heavily on existing courses from the Department of Communication and several other courses are listed as options (in “or” sequences) in other disciplines in this proposed curriculum.

* Preliminary Plans for Collaboration With Other Institutions:
We plan to collaborate with Western Kentucky University’s Public Relations Program, especially for the Electronic P.R. course and other on-line courses.

Names of Individuals Contacted at Other Institutions: Dr. Jo-Ann Albers, (Chair of the School of Journalism and Broadcasting) and Professor Wilma King-Jones (Public Relations Program Coordinator) at Western Kentucky University are being contacted by Interim Dean of the College of Professional Studies J. Patrick Moynahan. We have selected Western Kentucky University as key collaborators because their program is a highly regarded program of distinction in public relations in the Commonwealth.