Leveling the Playing Field: Fostering Student Success in the PRSSA Bateman Case Study Competition

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ABSTRACT

This mixed-method study provides the first known scholarly research specifically about the PRSSA Bateman Case Study Competition. Through triangulation of data from a survey, focus groups, and public data analysis, the authors explored the benefits and challenges of Bateman as an experiential learning program in public relations education. While promoted by the PRSSA organization as "the premier national case study competition for public relations students" (PRSSA, n.d.), research insights indicate that Bateman falls short in meeting students' educational needs, which is reflected in a 41.7% decrease in competition entries since 2018. Study findings provide support for several research-based recommendations to improve competition practices related to the competition timeline, experiential learning outcomes, organizational communication, judging practices, and support for diversity, equity, and inclusion of Bateman student teams.

Keywords: PRSSA, Bateman Case Study Competition, DE&I, experiential learning, CPRE, PRSA, student competitions

The Public Relations Student Society of America's (PRSSA) Bateman Case Study Competition (Bateman) offers experiential learning activity by way of a national competition open to student teams composed of PRSSA members from a single university. Founded in 1973, the competition began as a single-day activity that challenged students to brainstorm a solution to a public relations problem (Teahan et al., 2008). Today, Bateman has grown to a multi-month competition where student teams create localized campaigns for a national "client" that takes students through the process of research, planning, implementation, and evaluation of a public relations campaign. To complete their entries, student teams submit a case study that documents their campaign process and outcomes. Judging results are completed by the end of April to select three finalists and a varying number of honorable mention teams. Bateman offers significant incentives to the three finalist teams including travel for teams to present their cases in person to a judging panel to determine ranking, a trophy and $3,500 for first place, plaque and $2,500 for second place, and plaque and $1,500 for third place.

As Bateman combines both the implementation portion of a campaign and a competition, it is unique among experiential learning opportunities. The competition usually, but does not always, partners with a non-profit client, which offers direct ties to career non-profit experience. Lastly, as the competition is judged by public relations professionals in the industry, Bateman demonstrates real outcomes like those completing a campaign in a professional setting would see. Other strategic communication student competitions such as the American Advertising Federation's National Student Advertising Competition (AAF, n.d.), Enactus World Cup (Enactus, n.d.), and HubSpot Level Up (HubSpot, n.d.) are pitched with proposed campaigns or simulations. Bateman, on the other hand, takes experiential learning a step further by adding local campaign implementation and submission of a case study that documents

the campaign process and tangible outcomes.

While PRSSA Headquarters indicates that "more than 75 teams enter the competition each year…" (PRSSA, n.d.a), entries have not met that level since 2018 and have consistently trended downward. The number of competing teams decreased 41.7% from the 84 entries in 2018 to 49 in 2023 (PRSSA, n.d.b; PRSSA, n.d.c; PRSSA, n.d.d; PRSSA, n.d.e; PRSSA, n.d.f; PRSSA, n.d.g), which coincides with 44.8% decrease in overall PRSSA membership from 10,348 in 2018 to 5,772 in 2023 (PRSSA, 2018; PRSA, 2023a). Those figures might indicate that Bateman is not meeting the evolving needs of public relations education and/or support for a positive and successful experience for students who participate in the competition.

Little has been documented regarding how universities decide to compete in Bateman or how the competition supports experiential learning of students. Some universities integrate Bateman in a course, some use it as a student agency project, and others use it as an extracurricular activity. The purpose of this mixed-methods study—comprised of a questionnaire, focus groups, and public data analysis—is to explore the benefits and challenges of Bateman in the context of the Commission on Public Relations' (CPRE, 2018; CPRE, 2023) curriculum research and recommendations, common practices of Bateman finalist and honorable mention teams, and how the competition supports diversity, equity, and inclusion in competition practices. Study findings provide support for research-based recommendations to enhance competition practices to better meet the current needs of public relations education.

Literature Review

Public Relations Curricula Objectives

There is no shortage of published research that assesses the advertising and public relations curricula and its ability to address the ever-changing needs of the industry (Anwer & Kwong, 2022; Auger &

Cho, 2016; Brunner et al., 2018; CPRE, 2018; CPRE, 2006; Coombs & Rybacki, 1999; DiStaso et al., 2009; Johnson & Ross, 2001; Kim et al., 2021; Neff et al., 1999; Neill & Shauster, 2015; Stacks et al., 1999; Todd & Hudson, 2009). To best understand the ongoing discussion of core skills taught in public relations, one must first begin with program accreditation and certification standards. Accreditation for advertising and public relations is primarily granted by two institutions, a) the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC), and b) the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), which offers Certification in Education in Public Relations (CEPR).

While accreditation from ACEJMC may apply to advertising and public relations programs that are housed in larger journalism and mass communication departments or schools, the accreditation process does not specifically address the standards of quality that may be unique to advertising and public relations education. The Commission on Public Relations Education (CPRE) specifically addresses quality standards in public relations education, including six specific courses that were identified as "ideal" for an undergraduate public relations program in its report, "Fast Forward: Foundations + Future State. Educators + Practitioners" (CPRE, 2018). The six courses are: a) Introduction or Principles, b) Research, c) Writing, d) Campaigns and Case Studies, e) Supervised Work Experience and Internships, and f) Ethics.

CPRE's mission is to be "the authoritative voice on public relations education," and provides "recommendations on public relations education for universities and professional associations across the globe" (CPRE, n.d.). Learning objectives are commonly mapped from top attributes of knowledge, skills, abilities to assess the connections and gaps between PR curricula and professional practice. Educators need clearly articulated learning outcomes that prepare students for entry-level careers in public relations (Brunner et al., 2018). Due to the increased scrutiny and focus

on assessment in academia, tangible learning outcomes are also important for program assessment by universities (Bajkiewicz & Nash, 2023), and accrediting/certification bodies (ACEJMC, n.d.; PRSA, 2023b). An issue that continues to arise in public relations education is "the difference between what educators believe they are teaching and what practitioners believe they will find in new hires" (CPRE, 2023, p. 47). This is where experiential learning programs like the Bateman Case Study Competition are extremely valuable (Maben & Whitson, 2013).

RQ1: How does the PRSSA Bateman Case Study Competition support public relations curricula?

Experiential Learning as Pedagogical Practice

The benefits of experiential learning as a pedagogical practice have been widely studied and are such a critical component of some college majors that they are infused into the requirements, such as nursing clinicals or student teaching. Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory has served as a framework for studies encompassing a wide variety of higher education programs. As Clark et al. (2010) noted from a U.S. Department of Education report, experiential learning "is a broad term generally used to describe a series of pragmatic activities sequenced in such a way that it is thought to enhance the educational experience for the student learner" (p. 46), and the focus of experiential learning is an application of theory into an "encounter with a learning environment" that requires active student engagement (p. 48). This opportunity is distinct from the more passive teacher-led classroom experience (Clark et al., 2010; Stutts & West, 2005).

In public relations education, experiential learning has been widely adapted for aspects of the public relations curriculum, such as digital (McCollough, et al., 2021; Ewing et al., 2018) and social media management (Fraustino et al., 2015; Garcia & Brooks, 2022; Kinsky et al., 2014), writing (Meganck & Smith, 2019; Childers & Levenshus,

2016) and strategic campaigns (Aldoory & Wrigley, 1999; Benigni et al., 2004; Weed, 2018). As Weed (2018) noted, key business skills relevant to public relations professionals were evident through experiential learning in ways that directly benefited students' transition into the workplace. Public relations, as a discipline, benefits from pre-professional experience and the application of classroom concepts (Andrews, 2007; Jackson, 2015).

Student Perceptions of Experiential Learning

Research about student perceptions of strategic communication experiential learning has overwhelmingly shown that students see value in the opportunity (Aldoory & Wrigley, 1999), and feel that they learn much more in competitions versus in-class projects (Kim et al., 2021; Stutts & West, 2005). In the student-run agency, students report satisfaction with the experiential learning opportunities that use real clients to hone professional skills and open career opportunities (Begini et al., 2004; Bush, 2009; Ranta et al., 2021). A common experiential learning model is service learning, where PR students work with a non-profit on a campaign, often in groups to facilitate better group dynamic engagement (Pope-Ruark et al., 2014). Service learning also allows for more student autonomy and creativity than traditional class-based projects (Werder & Strand, 2011), and fosters ethical professional practice (Place, 2018).

RQ2: What are common management practices of PRSSA Bateman Case Study Competition teams?

Addressing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Experiential Learning

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is a broad term that encompasses many common characteristics of individuals or groups including race, ethnicity, gender, and orientation (Place & Vanc, 2016), but also includes other less transparent constructs such as economic security and access to needed resources. Underrepresented students encounter various obstacles, including a low sense of belonging, stress, and less access to resources, which can lead to an academic journey often marked

by struggles with cognitive skills, socio-emotional challenges, and identity development (Tsai et al., 2022). Previous research found that PR educators should create inclusive environments (Tsai et al., 2022) and promote diverse mentorship opportunities (Brown et al., 2019). effectiveness of campaign research, implementation, and evaluation. Success in diversity and inclusion initiatives hinges on the commitment, responsibility, and accountability of leadership to drive the necessary structural and cultural transformations (Bardhan & Gower, 2022).

To construct a comprehensive framework for enhancing DEI in a PR classroom, Meganck and Kim (2022) found variability in the implementation of DEI-focused structural elements (e.g., value statements, course objectives, textbook selection, assignments, course evaluation). High levels of practice were observed in creating inclusive learning environments and in fostering intrapersonal and interpersonal awareness. However, areas like curriculum transformation and professional development for DEI need further improvement in this area. Anwer and Kwong (2022) take it one step further and move DEI out of the classroom and into PRSSA to showcase that extracurricular activities "can be a space for learning and teaching public relations at the intersections of leadership, mentorship, and DEI" (p. 161).

On a larger scale, DEI is an important issue that should be recognized between related organizations such as different universities competing in a student competition. Comparisons of social class can manifest in perceptions of imposter syndrome (Waymer, 2012), which is relevant to open student competitions where entries are judged in one pool, regardless of specific advantages or biases that might exist due to university prestige, size, or resources (Brutus & Bothello, 2021). Bothner et al. (2011) argued that the benefits of case competitions can be improved when investments are made in non-elite participants. One way to increase this type of investment is by integrating case competition participation into

a capstone class design (Lebrón et al., 2020).

RQ3: Does the PRSSA Bateman Case Study Competition support diversity, equity, and inclusion of competition teams?

Method

This mixed-method study consisted of (a) an online questionnaire distributed to Bateman faculty and professional advisers, (b) a series of five one-hour focus groups with advisers, and (c) a content analysis of Bateman information publicly available on the PRSSA Headquarters and university websites. The use of multiple research methods provides three data sources to compare and contrast the benefits and challenges of Bateman competition experience from different perspectives. The questionnaire provided broad insights into numerous aspects of the Bateman competition. The focus groups allowed advisers to delve more deeply into qualitative assessment of their, and students,' competition experience. Public information from PRSSA Headquarters and universities provided a complete and accurate scope of competition outcomes and common qualities of competition teams that would not be captured in voluntary participation of either the study questionnaire or focus groups.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was developed using Qualtrics software and distributed via three rounds of individual emails to identified Bateman faculty and professional advisers during the 2017 through 2020 competition years. Questionnaire protocols were approved by the respective institutional review boards of the authors. The questionnaire included 80 items that measured five categories of information: (a) demographic information about advisers and universities of Bateman teams, (b) Bateman faculty adviser expectations and duties, c) management of Bateman teams, (d) perceptions about how Bateman aligns with public relations curriculum learning objectives, and (e) general perceptions of the competition. Qualifying questions at the beginning of

the questionnaire confirmed participants' consent to participate, that they were at least 18 years of age, and that they were a Bateman adviser at any point between 2017 and 2020. No identifying information was collected as part of the survey, though respondents could opt-in for a $50 Amazon gift card drawing through a separate link using their employer email addresses.

Demographic Information

This section consisted of 15 questions to collect data about: (a) demographic information about advisers and universities, (b) accreditation status of advisers and universities, and (c) general PRSSA chapter information (as Bateman is a PRSSA-affiliated event).

Bateman Faculty Adviser Information

Eight questions covered topics such as (a) the appointment process for Bateman faculty advisers, (b) faculty status, (c) general information about Bateman faculty advising duties, and d) compensation for Bateman faculty advising.

Management of Bateman Teams

This section consisted of 23 multiple-choice questions that covered topics related to the day-to-day management of Bateman teams during the competition timeline. Question topics included (a) recruitment practices for Bateman teams, (b) the impact of university academic calendars on participation in Bateman, (c) time commitment of students and advisers throughout the competition timeline, and (d) student compensation for participation in the Bateman, (e) departmental support for Bateman teams, and f) placement of Bateman teams as a finalist or honorable mention.

Perceptions of Alignment between the Bateman Case Study Competition Alignment and PR Curricula

Participants answered three multiple-choice questions that assessed their perception of how well Bateman aligned with results of CPRE's Fast Forward (2018) report about the state of public relations education. Participants stated their level of agreement on how well the competition

integrated: (a) 12 areas of public relations knowledge, (b) 13 unique skills, and (c) five abilities that were identified in the Fast Forward report (see Appendix A).

General Perceptions of the Bateman Case Study Competition

Fifteen Likert-scale and 10 open-ended questions gained further insights about the respondent's perception of Bateman including: (a) rules and regulations, (b) competition judging, (c) student and adviser challenges and opportunities of competing.

Focus Groups

Five focus groups were conducted via Zoom, and were composed of five to eight participants who identified as a Bateman faculty or professional adviser in the past year. Care was taken to ensure diversity within each focus group between adviser role, length of service as an adviser, university size, and award-winning status of their Bateman team(s). Each focus group lasted one hour and consisted of six questions about Bateman including: (a) student benefits, (b) student challenges, (c) alignment with PR curriculum objectives, (d) general reputation, (e) fairness and equity, and (f) improvement recommendations.

Content Analysis

Information about Bateman competition teams was gathered from a public information search on the PRSSA HQ website, websites of universities with Bateman teams, and the Carnegie Classification website. A content analysis was conducted for the past decade of the competition from 2014 through 2023. Items included from the PRSSA HQ website in the content analysis were (a) Bateman client, (b) quantity of entries, (c) finalist and honorable mention teams, and (d) project brief release date (PRSSA, n.d.). On university websites, the webpages of Bateman home departments and university class schedules were searched to determine if class credit (classes, independent studies, practicums) was provided for student participation in the competition. The Carnegie Classifications

website provided information about the public/private status of the institution (American Council on Education, n.d.).

Participant Recruitment

Questionnaire

      The authors identified Bateman Case Study Competition faculty and professional advisers through an information request to PRSSA Headquarters. The authors requested the names of faculty and professional advisers from the most recent five years, which was included with each Bateman Competition team's intent-to-enter form as submitted at the beginning of the competition timeline. While the PRSSA Headquarters office complied with the information request, only adviser information from 2017 through 2020 was provided to the authors.

In total, 292 teams from 91 universities competed in Bateman from 2017 through 2020. From the information provided by the PRSSA Headquarters office, the names of 123 faculty advisers and 106 professional advisers were identified. The authors proceeded with an email contact search through the PRSA member directory, university websites, and general searches through Google.

      Contact email information was found for all 123 faculty advisers identified in the Bateman intent-to-enter form. Four emails were returned as undeliverable and two people responded to say they were not a Bateman faculty adviser, bringing the total sample of faculty advisers to 117. Of the 106 professional advisers identified in the Bateman intent-to-enter form, email addresses could not be found for 15 advisers, nine emails were returned as undeliverable, and seven people responded to say they were not a Bateman professional adviser, bringing the total sample population to 75.

      Three rounds of individualized study invitation emails were sent over four weeks to the faculty and professional advisers. Study participants had the opportunity to voluntarily enter a drawing for a $50

Amazon e-gift card at the end of the survey, with one winner selected for every 10 participants.

Focus Groups

Focus group recruitment occurred in Fall 2021. The authors used the same contact list of Bateman advisers, but asked recipients to share the name of a new adviser if applicable. Invitation emails asked interested participants to complete a short informational survey that included the participant's (a) name, (b) Bateman adviser role, (c) time served as an adviser, (d) how many times they had advised a Bateman team that earned honorable mention or finalist placement, (e) university size, and (f) time availability.

Three rounds of individualized study invitation emails were sent over two weeks to the faculty and professional advisers. All focus group participants received a $10 Amazon e-gift card.

Participant Demographics

Questionnaire

Seventy-nine advisers completed the questionnaire, for an overall response rate of 41.1%, which was further broken down by faculty advisers at a 46.2% response rate ($n = 54$), professional advisers at a 22.7% response rate ($n = 17$), and eight respondents who served as both faculty and professional adviser during the 2017 through 2020 Bateman competition years. One participant did not respond.

The majority of the study population identified as female at 76.0% ($n = 60$), 22.8% ($n = 18$) identified as male. Of the respondents who indicated the years of work experience they held in the public relations industry ($n = 77$), 62.3% ($n = 48$) held 10 or more years of PR work experience, followed by four-to-nine years at 19.5% ($n = 15$), and three years or less at 18.2% ($n = 14$). Among respondents who held Accreditation in Public Relations ($n =26$), a PRSA-affiliated professional certification, 16 were faculty advisers, six were professional advisers,

and four had acted as both faculty and professional advisers in the 2017 through 2020 study timeline.

Among faculty adviser respondents, including those who served as both faculty and professional advisers during the 2017 through 2020 timeline ($n = 61$), 50.0% ($n = 31$) identified as tenure-track faculty including 16 assistant professors, 11 associate professors, and four full professors. Non-tenure track faculty comprised the other 46.8% ($n = 29$), including 24 full-time, one part-time, and four who did not indicate full-time or part-time status. The remaining two participants identified as graduate student instructors. Participants who had been faculty for seven or more years comprised 45.2% ($n = 28$), followed by those who had been faculty for four-to-six years at 29.0% ($n = 18$), and those who had been faculty for three or less years at 24.2% ($n = 15$). In regard to teaching load, 72.1% taught three ($n = 22$) or four ($n = 22$) classes per term, 23.0% taught one ($n = 4$) or two ($n = 10$) classes, and 4.8% ($n = 3$) taught five or more classes. In addition to Bateman advising, 75.0% of respondents either served as faculty ($n = 42$) or professional ($n = 1$) adviser for their university PRSSA chapter.

Focus Groups

Twenty-nine focus group participants were comprised of 24 faculty advisers, three professional advisers, and two participants who had served as both faculty and professional adviser in different years of the competition. Two participants were also identified as Bateman judges in addition to being an adviser. Four participants had been an adviser for less than one year, 14 for one to three years, four for four to six years, three for seven to nine years, and four for 10+ years. Thirteen participants came from universities with less than 10,000 students, 10 from universities with 10,000 - 39,999 students, and six from universities with 40,000+ students. Thirteen participants advised at least one Bateman team that had received an honorable mention or placed as a finalist from 2017 to 2020.

Results

Alignment with Public Relations Curricula Objectives

The study questionnaire explored how well Bateman aligned with curricular learning objectives identified in CPRE's (2018) Fast Forward report. Seventy-one faculty and professional adviser respondents rate how important, from 1 = not important to 5 = extremely important, that students participating in Bateman use 12 knowledge areas, 13 skills, and five abilities that CPRE identified as important for entry-level PR practitioners to possess.

Knowledge

Advisers rated the CPRE knowledge areas of ethics ($M = 4.10$, $SD = .95$), followed by management ($M = 4.06$, $SD = .85$), cultural perspective ($M = 4.04$, $SD = .86$), social issues ($M = 4.03$, $SD = .82$), diversity & inclusion ($M = 4.03$, $SD = .95$), and business acumen ($M = 4.00$, $SD = .89$) as more important for students participating in Bateman. Lower ratings of importance were found for PR laws and regulation ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 1.07$), internal or employee communication ($M = 3.51$, $SD = 1.13$), global perspectives ($M = 3.21$, $SD = .99$), crisis management ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 1.20$), and PR history ($M = 2.16$, $SD = .94$). A one-way ANOVA found no significant differences between adviser type and level of agreement for any of the 12 knowledge areas.

Skills

Advisers rated some applied skills as important for students participating in Bateman. Writing received the strongest level of agreement ($M = 4.81$, $SD = .46$), followed by communication ($M = 4.76$, $SD = .464$), research & analytics ($M = 4.54$, SD $= .58$), editing ($M = 4.44$, $SD = .77$), social media management ($M = 4.44$, $SD = .63$), storytelling ($M = 4.30$, $SD = .77$), and media relations ($M = 4.07$, $SD = .748$). Lesser ratings found for graphic design ($M = 3.77$, $SD = .86$), public speaking ($M = 3.77$, $SD = .981$), ($M = 3.41$, $SD = .893$), website development

(M = 3.37, SD = .904), speechwriting (M = 2.74, SD = 1.01), and app development (M = 2.11, SD = .826). A one-way ANOVA found significant differences between adviser type and rating for graphic design [$F(2,66)$ = 3.984, p = .003], audio/video production [$F(2,67)$ = 2.459, p = .043], and website development [$F(2,67)$ = 3.244, p = .013), with faculty advisers rating those skills as more important.

Abilities

Overall, the advisers highly rated strategic planning (M = 4.76, SD = .43), problem solving (M = 4.73, SD = .51), critical thinking (M = 4.71, SD = .54), creative thinking (M = 4.70, SD = .46), and analytical thinking (M = 4.61, SD = .55) as important for students competing in Bateman. A one-way ANOVA found no significant differences between adviser type and level of agreement for any of the five abilities.

Management Practices of Bateman Teams

The first management practice of Bateman teams was student recruitment. While the majority of questionnaire respondents indicated that they recruited Bateman teams from within PR majors at 66.7% (n = 36), 29.6% (n = 16) indicated that they recruited from outside their PR student population, and 3.7% (n = 2) did not know from which student groups they recruited. A one-way ANOVA found a significant difference in whether Bateman teams were recruited from outside PR students based on how long the university had participated in the competition [$F(6,38)$ = 2.513, p = .038], with universities that had participated in Bateman for eight or more years being less likely to recruit outside of PR students. Further tests of one-way ANOVAs found no significant difference in recruiting teams outside of PR students along the variables of how long the respondent had been a Bateman adviser or the size of the university. Recruitment was also noted as a challenge by 37.9% (n = 11) of focus group participants.

The majority of advisers indicated the students receive some type of course credit at 81.5% ($n = 54$), whether it be a specific Bateman class ($n = 14$), as a section option for an existing course such as campaigns or a capstone ($n = 18$), an independent study ($n = 11$), or as multi-course series ($n = 1$). Nearly 13% ($n = 7$) of respondents indicated their students did not receive course credit, participated as part of an extracurricular student-run agency ($n = 1$), or did not know if students received credit ($n = 2$). Of respondents who indicated how many credit hours students received to compete in Bateman ($n = 46$), 70.0% (n = 32) noted students received one-to-three credit hours, followed by four-to-six hours at 24.0% ($n = 11$), and no credit hours at 6.5% ($n = 3$). That data was supported by a public information analysis of university websites and course catalogs for Bateman finalists and honorable teams that found through the past decade, 73.3% ($n = 22$) of finalists and 55.8% ($n = 76$) of honorable mention teams received some form of class credit (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

2014-2023 Bateman Finalists & Honorable Mention Teams that Receive Class Credit
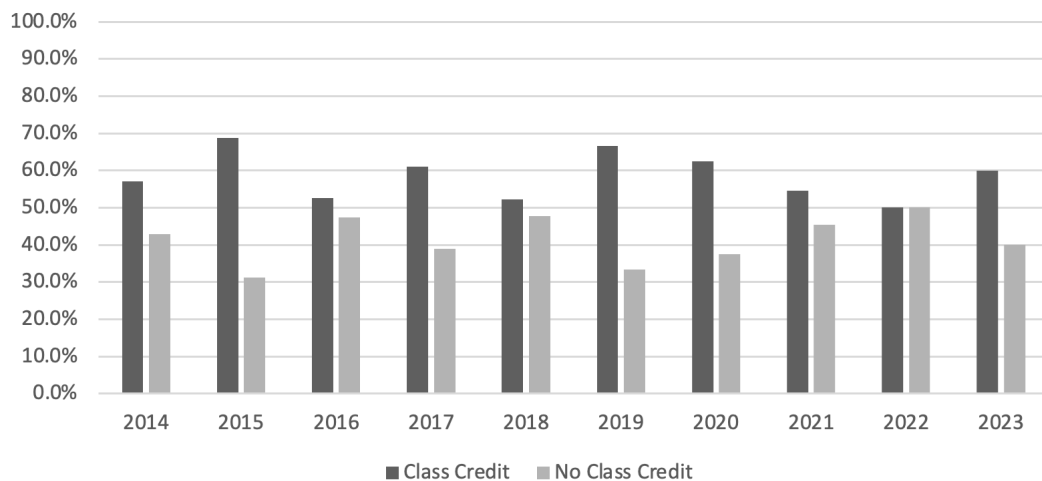
Time Commitment

Faculty respondents were asked to indicate the average amount of time they committed to Bateman advising duties throughout the individual months of the competition along the scale of: (a) none, (b) one-to-three hours, (c) four-to-six hours, (d) seven-to-nine hours, and (e) 10+ hours. The majority of respondents spent one-to-three hours per week on Bateman tasks during the months of October ($n = 29$), November ($n = 29$), December ($n = 32$), and April ($n = 21$). The greatest number of respondents increased their time commitment to between four and six hours per week in the months of January ($n = 18$), February ($n = 19$), and March ($n = 14$), though many other advisers increased their time commitment to seven hours or more per week in January ($n = 7$), February ($n = 13$), and March ($n = 17$). A one-way ANOVA found no significant differences between how Bateman faculty advisers were compensated and their time commitment through the individual months of the competition timeline.

The majority of survey respondents indicated their Bateman teams spent one-to-three hours per week on competition tasks in October at 55.1% ($n = 27$), November at 53.0% ($n = 26$), and December at 67.4% ($n = 33$). Time commitment increased for the majority of respondents to four-to-six for the month of January at 46.9% ($n = 23$) and April at 35.4% ($n = 17$), and seven hours or more for the months of February at 63.2% ($n = 31$) and March at 73.5% ($n = 36$). Significant positive correlations between the number of credit hours students received and the number of hours committed to Bateman tasks were found throughout the competition timeline (see Table 1).

Table 1

Correlation of Credit Hours and Hours Committed Per Month to Bateman Tasks

		Average Hours Per Week Spent on Bateman Tasks - October	Average Hours Per Week Spent on Bateman Tasks - November	Average Hours Per Week Spent on Bateman Tasks - December	Average Hours Per Week Spent on Bateman Tasks - January	Average Hours Per Week Spent on Bateman Tasks - February	Average Hours Per Week Spent on Bateman Tasks - March	Average Hours Per Week Spent on Bateman Tasks - April
How many credit hours do students receive for participating in the Bateman Case Study Competition?	Pearson Correlation	.639**	.578**	.454**	.412**	.454**	.500**	.309*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.002	.004	.002	.000	.038
	N	46	46	46	46	46	46	46

** p < .001
* p < .05

Further tests of one-way ANOVAs found significant differences between a Bateman team's placement as a finalist and the number of hours committed to Bateman tasks in the months of January [$F(2,50) = 3.550$, $p = .036$], February [$F(2,50) = 3.748$, $p = .030$), March [$F(2,50) = 4.229$, $p = .020$). Finalist teams spent averaged four to six hours per week on competition tasks, while non-finalists averaged one to three hours per week. No significant difference was found between the amount of time Bateman teams committed to competition tasks and receiving an honorable mention acknowledgment.

Time commitment for students was also an area of concern among 25.6% ($n = 8$) focus group participants. One focus group participant summed up the challenge many were facing with competing priorities,

> Our challenge has been that it's not, at my university, built into a
> classroom structure at all, so our team is always just a group of

> volunteers, students who take this on outside of any other class work or any other PRSSA involvement or internships… this is just one more thing on their plate.

Survey respondents also agreed that students should receive course credit for their work in the competition (*M* = 4.48, *SD* =.94). A one-way ANOVA found no significant difference between faculty and professional advisers in their level of agreement with the statement. A seasoned Bateman adviser noted,

> I would say it's very, very difficult to be competitive in Bateman without that classroom structure, credit and without a dedicated faculty member who's doing that as part of their teaching. I'm sure it's possible. It's a very, very difficult thing given the volume of resources and time that faculty need to put in for it to be successful.
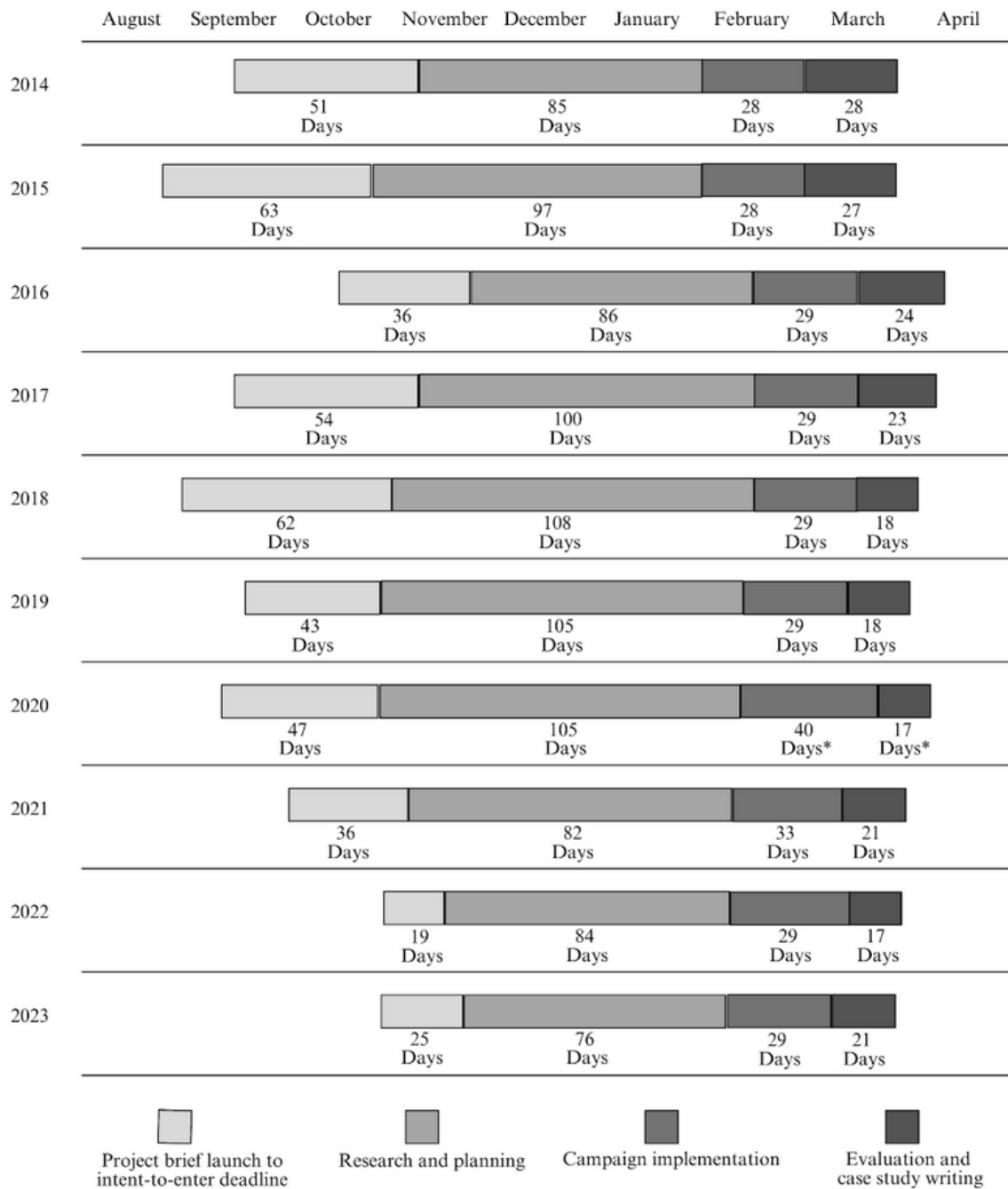
Supporting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion of Bateman Teams
Competition Timeline

Among faculty and professional adviser survey respondents (*n* = 72), 62.5% (*n* = 45) disagreed that the timeline of Bateman worked with students' schedules, and 52.2% (*n* = 37) disagreed that the competition timeline worked with their own schedule. The competition timeline emerged as the most prominent concern of focus group participants, with it mentioned in the context of challenges from 65.5% (*n* = 19) of advisers, diminishing the reputation of the competition from 44.8% (*n* = 13), fairness of competition practices by 13.9% (*n* = 4), and an area for improvement by 51.7% (*n* = 15). As a faculty adviser stated, "Structurally, Bateman is not compatible with my program. The timing just does not work and we, as a department, cannot find a home credits-wise for it." Additional advisers noted the timeline is compatible with university research regulations, with one advisor who shared, "I'll start with the beginning of the timeline in terms of, you know, the research

phase, and we run into issues that conflict our IRB application deadlines, so when the information is released, it's too late."

An analysis of the Bateman timeline documentation of the PRSSA HQ website found little standardization in terms of project brief launch, intent-to-enter deadlines, length of research and planning timelines, campaign implementation, or length of time to complete case study writing. The total length of time of Bateman, from project brief launch to the case study submission deadline, has decreased from 217 days in 2018 to 150 days in 2023. The reduction in the Bateman timeline can be linked to continually later project brief launch dates, which usually occurred in September but have moved to the end of October in recent years. With the later Bateman project brief launch dates, there has been as little as 19 days for teams to decide whether to compete and a reduction of campaign and planning from more than 100 to 76 days (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

2014-2023 Bateman Competition Timeline

	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April

2014 — 51 Days / 85 Days / 28 Days / 28 Days

2015 — 63 Days / 97 Days / 28 Days / 27 Days

2016 — 36 Days / 86 Days / 29 Days / 24 Days

2017 — 54 Days / 100 Days / 29 Days / 23 Days

2018 — 62 Days / 108 Days / 29 Days / 18 Days

2019 — 43 Days / 105 Days / 29 Days / 18 Days

2020 — 47 Days / 105 Days / 40 Days* / 17 Days*

2021 — 36 Days / 82 Days / 33 Days / 21 Days

2022 — 19 Days / 84 Days / 29 Days / 17 Days

2023 — 25 Days / 76 Days / 29 Days / 21 Days

Legend:
- Project brief launch to intent-to-enter deadline
- Research and planning
- Campaign implementation
- Evaluation and case study writing

* Timeline extended one week due to COVID-19 U.S. shelter-in-place policy

University spring breaks also posed a challenge in the competition timeline. Nearly 90.0% of respondents indicated that university spring break occurred in March, with the greatest number of respondents indicating that spring break fell during the second week of March at 42.3% ($n = 22$), followed by the third week at 25.0% ($n = 13$), first week at 15.4% ($n = 8$), and fourth week at 5.8% ($n = 3$). The remaining 11.5% of respondents indicated their university spring break fell outside the month of March. The majority of faculty adviser survey respondents indicated their university spring break always overlapped with campaign implementation at 56.6% ($n = 30$) or sometimes overlapped at 35.6% ($n = 19$). Only 7.6% ($n = 4$) indicated that their university spring break never overlapped with Bateman campaign implementation. The format of a semester or quarter term had no effect on responses. Bateman teams whose spring breaks overlapped with the campaign timeline addressed the issue in various ways including some active campaign work during the break at 37.0% ($n = 17$), followed by pre-scheduling content at 30.4% ($n = 14$), treating spring break like any other week of the campaign at 17.4% ($n = 8$), and no work for the campaign during spring break at 15.2% ($n = 7$).

Access to Resources

Faculty adviser survey respondents ($n = 53$) indicated what types of departmental or university resources students received to compete in Bateman. Respondents most frequently indicated teams received access to event space reservations at 73.6% ($n = 39$), followed by access to specialized software such as Adobe Creative Suite, SPSS, or social media monitoring at 50.9% ($n = 27$), financial funding at 49.1% ($n = 26$), printing services at 39.6% ($n = 21$), office supplies at 35.8% ($n = 19$), and dedicated workspace such as a Bateman office at 18.9% ($n = 10$). In addition, 41.5% ($n = 22$) of respondents indicated teams received assistance from faculty who were not a Bateman adviser.

A one-way ANOVA found a significant difference between

university size and access to a dedicated workspace [$F(6,47) = 2.594$, $p = .032$], with Bateman teams from universities with more than 50,000 students being most likely to receive dedicated workspace. Further statistical tests determined no significant difference between access to specific resources when compared to university size, whether Bateman students received course credit, or placement of teams as a finalist or honorable mention in the competition from 2017 through 2020.

Competition Management Practices

Faculty and professional adviser survey respondents ($n = 71$) indicated that certain Bateman competition management practices no longer serve their needs or the needs of student participants. Respondents at least somewhat agreed with the statement that students should receive a competition orientation from the PRSSA HQ office ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 1.00$), which was supported by a comment from a faculty adviser, "Knowing details about the client and having the case brief when classes begin in the fall would be ideal for recruiting."

Responses from focus group participants also indicate issues with communication, with 27.5% ($n = 8$) identifying that as an area for improvement, with a focus group participant noting,

> Communicate, please tell us what's going on. The students
> are upset over the lack of a client, they're upset over the lack
> of communications from National, and they have complained
> repeatedly, and I don't blame them. Even if you have to call
> and say we don't have anything, at least tell us, but the lack of
> information posted on the website, and the lack of communication,
> along with a late client announcement has been just a persistent
> problem. We were actually working on a replacement
> client until they came out with one.

Another participant added, "Get the client announcement and brief out by no later than mid-July. Bateman advisers need some lead time." A third

participant shared,

> This year has just been a nightmare. This is my first year teaching it and being a faculty advisor. I've been a professional advisor before. I've been a judge, I've been a participant as a student, so I played all the roles with Bateman. Just from talking with colleagues and students, the reputation, word of mouth—granted this is all in my small- my small circle—is almost split. Students look at it one way, faculty look at the other, but over the last few years it's taken a hit with delayed announcements and the quality of the clients, especially this year.

Survey respondents most strongly disagreed with the statement that student teams should pay an intent-to-enter fee to compete in Bateman ($M = 2.00$, $SD = 1.17$), which was also reflected in a focus group respondent's insight about financial commitments to participate,

> I'm in a public university that has a variety of different types of students. It has first generation students. It has students who work sometimes two jobs to attend college…so some students, no big deal, but other students, you know, they don't have a car, and so there is some equity issues for a poor college student trying to act like a PR professional…I think it's worth thinking about that, you know, every school is different. That some students are socio-economically disadvantaged and that there might be an equity issue deeply embedded in the Bateman Competition.

Additional disagreements were found with statements that there is a level playing for all teams that compete in Bateman ($M = 2.21$, $SD = 1.12$), that the timeline of Bateman aligns with students' schedules ($M = 2.42$, $SD = 1.22$) or advisers' schedules ($M = 2.72$, $SD = 1.26$), and that there is no conflict-of-interest in having a PRSA organization as a client ($M = 2.28$, $SD = 1.33$). A one-way ANOVA found that faculty advisers (including those who also served as professional adviser between 2017

and 2020) expressed more disagreement that the Bateman timeline did not work with students' schedules [$F(2,70) = 4.792, p = .011$], their own schedule [$F(2,70) = 6.229, p = .003$], and there was no conflict-of-interest in having a PRSA organization as a client [$F(2,70) = 3.306, p = .043$]. A focus group participant stated that,

> Our university has decided that it won't participate when PRSSA or PRSA is the client because we find that paying money to do PR for the organization problematic. It's a weird lesson to teach students that they have to pay PRSA/PRSSA to do PR for PRSA/ PRSSA.

Overall, survey respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with statements that Bateman campaign objectives were clear ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.20$) and remained consistent throughout the competition timeline ($M = 3.28, SD = 1.26$). a significant difference was found between faculty and professional advisers, with faculty advisers expressing more disagreement with statements related to clarity [$F(2,70) = 5.227, p = .008$) and consistency [$F(2,70) = 5.994, p = .004$) of Bateman campaign objectives. Respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that Bateman campaign objectives were specific ($M = 3.48, SD = 1.39$), measurable ($M = 3.42, SD = 1.43$), achievable ($M = 3.48, SD = 1.40$), realistic ($M = 3.41, SD = 1.38$), or time-bound ($M = 3.99, SD = 1.26$). As a faculty adviser shared in an open-ended survey response, "having more professional PR experience or oversight of the clients and having advisors be part of drafting the brief would go a long way toward improving the experience for students." Another added that "improved client communication and clearer articulation of the campaign goals/ objectives—especially relative to what we teach as campaign best practices—would help."

Bateman Competition Judging

Faculty and professional adviser respondents (n = 70) indicated

their level of agreement with four statements related to the judging process of Bateman. Respondents agreed that the judging rubric for the competition should be included in the project brief ($M = 4.66$, $SD = .653$). A one-way ANOVA found no difference in the level of agreement between faculty and professional advisers. Respondents disagreed with statements that the judging process of Bateman was fair to all teams ($M = 2.65$, $SD = 1.14$) and that no bias existed in the judging ($M = 2.58$, $SD = 1.22$). A one-way ANOVA found a significant difference between faculty advisers and professional advisers (including those who had also served as faculty advisers during the 2017 through 2020 competition years) and their level of agreement that there is no bias judging [$F(2,70) = 3.807$, $p = .027$), with faculty advisers expressing greater disagreement with the statement. A focus group participant expanded on the issue of judging bias,

> One of the things that my students have looked at over the years is the list of the judges and the list of who wins, and the fact that the judges can be actually, it appears, maybe they have some way of doing this but it appears that the judges can be from a university and they can show favoritism towards a university because they know what school it is… Our students looked at it one time and said they actually went and did some research and saw how many people from a particular university were there in a year that particular university won. It looked unfair because there were so many people that were affiliated in some way shape or form with that university.

A review of Bateman finalist and honorable mention teams from 2014 through 2023 (see Appendix B) was conducted to determine how frequently universities placed in the competition. The analysis found that only 13 universities were awarded top three placements in the past 10 years, and five of those universities placed as a finalist three or more times during that time span. Of 55 honorable mention teams recognized

in the past decade, six universities received the distinction five or more times. Eighteen universities awarded as finalist or honorable mention since 2014 submitted case studies from multiple competition teams, and four of those universities won multiple awards in at least one competition year. An additional analysis found that 67.9% ($n = 112$) finalist and honorable mention teams came from public universities (see Figure 3).

Figure 3

2014-2023 Bateman Case Study Finalists & Honorable Mentions by University Type
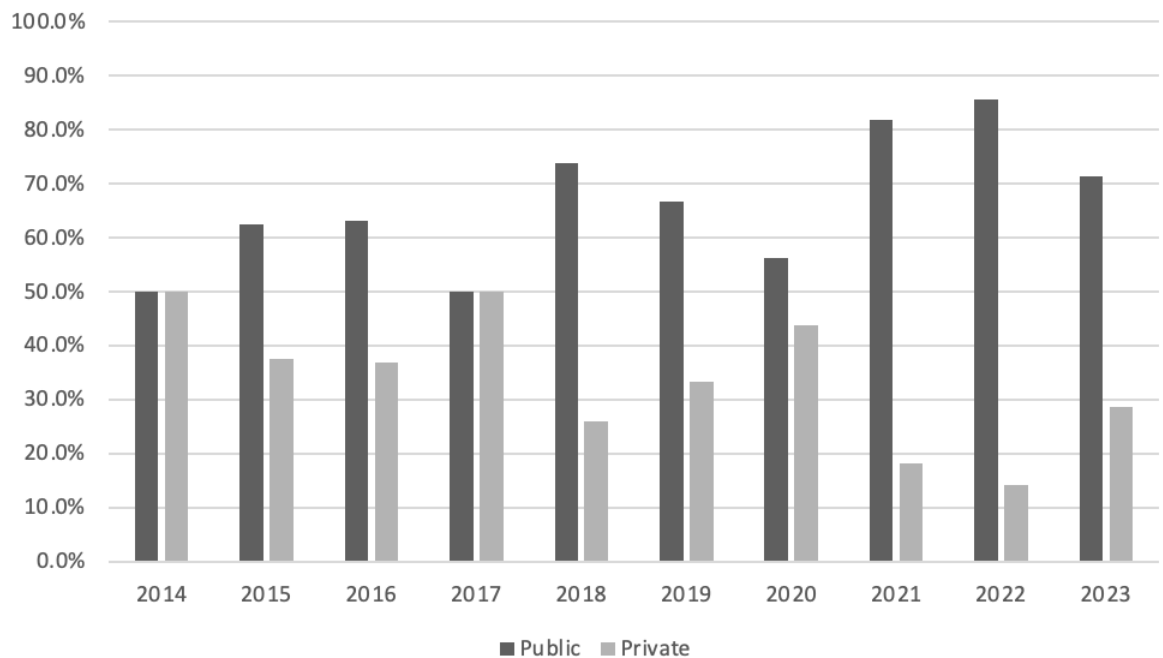
Training for judges was noted as a supplemental issue by focus group participants. As a faculty adviser shared,

> The feedback after working for almost a year is always so disappointing. We usually just get the scores and maybe one or two sentences. As faculty, we have to give our students a lot more feedback on projects with much shorter timelines. Getting the minimal feedback after doing free PR work for a client feels like a

slap in the face. It's not so much the content of that feedback, but the quality and amount of it that is so frustrating.

Another focus group respondent addressed the need for training in judging Bateman submissions,

I'm a member of both PRSA and [IBAC], and this is something I think [IBAC] does much better than PRSA. When they have competitions and there are judges, they provide judges training. It's an online thing that you go through, self-paced, but they provide training for the judges on what to look for, how to give feedback in a constructive way, what kinds of things need feedback.

Survey respondents also agreed that Bateman should be blind judged in the first round to determine finalists and honorable mentions ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 1.20$), and that Bateman teams should be judged in groups based on university size ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 1.43$). Respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that Bateman teams should be judged in divisions based on university size ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 1.43$), though it was noted by 17.2% ($n = 5$) focus group participants as a way to improve the competition, as one participant shared,

I think that could accomplish a couple of things aside from leveling the playing field, if you will, either by size of school or resources or market. You could also then open up more opportunities for recognition which I think is really key-accomplishes that regional thing but the national thing but just, you know, there are more winners, more students get to see that they were successful, which I think is very powerful for the program.

Discussion

This study provides the first academic research specifically about the PRSSA Bateman Case Study Competition. While promoted by the PRSSA organization as "the premier national case study competition for public relations students" (PRSSA, para. 1, n.d.a), insights from

faculty and professional advisers indicate that Bateman falls short in meeting students' educational needs. Research results identified several recommendations for improvement related to the competition timeline, experiential learning outcomes, support for diversity, equity, and inclusion of Bateman teams, communication, and judging.

Study findings demonstrate that the Bateman experience integrates several knowledge areas, skills, and abilities identified by CPRE as important for entry-level public relations practitioners. That demonstrates the value of the competition experience as part of a learning curriculum, where advisers lead applied learning practices that directly benefit student success. Yet, the real questions lie in how to motivate students and advisers to participate in Bateman. What makes Bateman a more valuable experiential learning opportunity over other student competitions such as the National Student Advertising Competition, National Organ Donor Awareness Competition, CreateAthon, or university-based activities such as a service-learning class or student-run agency? As other options for experiential learning have emerged in public relations and strategic communication education, there is a greater need for Bateman organizers to demonstrate how the competition uniquely supports students' academic success and professional development.

Experiential Learning Objectives

As a student competition, the priority of Bateman must be to prioritize experiential learning that integrates knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) that are emphasized by university PR curricula and education leadership organizations such as CPRE and accrediting/ certification standards of ACEJMC and PRSA. While some skills were rated as highly important for students participating in the competition, there is a missed opportunity to clearly address how specific KSAs should be addressed as learning objectives in the Bateman campaign brief and other promotional materials. The alignment of curricular objectives to

experiential learning outcomes of Bateman could be accomplished through the establishment of an advisory council or similar entity. The authors recommend an advisory council representing organizational thought leaders in public relations education to enhance the competition's value as an experiential learning program that supports student success and career readiness.

Supporting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion of Bateman Teams

Competition Timeline

As indicated in the results of both the questionnaire and focus groups, the October through April competition timeline does not work for students or advisers. As the majority of universities work within a semester system, a project brief launch in late October begins well after the beginning of the fall term and the case study submission date in April occurs before the end of the spring term. That hinders the ability of universities to integrate Bateman into existing classes, or to receive curriculum approval to add Bateman as a standalone class. In addition, the campaign implementation portion of the competition often overlaps with university spring breaks, which can negatively impact students' ability to launch and manage campaign tactics or put students in a position to continue campaign work even when classes are not in session. The authors recommend that Bateman organizers revise the competition timeline to work within a single academic term to ensure consistency and equity for participating teams (see Table 2).

Table 2

Recommended Timeline for Bateman to Align with Academic Calendar

First Monday of November	Client Announcement
First Monday of December	Project Brief posted online, and all documents sent via email.
Last Friday of January	Deadline to submit Intent-to-Enter form.
March 1 – April 15	Campaign Implementation (Team may choose four weeks).
May 1	Case Study deadline.

Compensation for Work

Bateman faculty advisers commit to a nine-month competition timeline with the majority committing one-to-three hours per week on competition tasks from October through December, and four-to-six hours per week from January through April. While the majority of faculty advisers received compensation for their work with Bateman teams, it is important to note that more than one-third of respondents received no compensation. Given the extensive time commitment that often exceeds the expectations of service, Bateman faculty advisers might run the risk of offsetting those hours by reducing their commitment to research or teaching, which is a common issue among PRSSA faculty advisers (Waymer, 2014; Weed et al., 2020).

The issue of time commitment also relates to students, as indicated by focus group participants, as some students are participating on a solely volunteer basis while others have dedicated hours to work on the campaign as a part of a dedicated class or independent study experience. That creates a scenario of inequity as Bateman students who receive course credit commit more time to competition tasks. On average, student teams spend one-to-three hours per week on competition tasks from October through December, and four-to six hours per week in January, and seven or more hours per week in February and March. At minimum, that is 72 hours a Bateman team commits to client tasks over the competition timeline. In terms of U.S. minimum wage, each Bateman team completes work worth at least $526.40 when calculated at the national minimum wage of $7.45 per hour (U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.). In addition, students (or universities) pay the intent-to-enter fee for each team and PRSSA membership costs. Research from the National Association for Colleges and Employers (NACE) maintains that experiential learning activities are "vital in bridging the college experience to the world of work. Strengthening the availability of funding and protections for

internships assures greater participant diversity, access, and opportunity, enhancing the overall quality and productivity of the workforce" (NACE, n.d. para. 14).

In the questionnaire, 87% of respondents indicated that their Bateman team received some form of course credit. In addition, the review of Bateman finalists and honorable mentions found that, overall, 42.4% came from universities that offer credit for Bateman credit but 73.3% of finalist teams receive credit. That makes sense in the context of dedicated hours per week students can commit to Bateman tasks, as well as a defined structure within to complete competition tasks under the guidance of faculty advisers who are also compensated for their participation. More efforts are needed from Bateman organizers to ensure that competition practices don't hinder its integration into a class model. The 41.7% drop in Bateman entries since 2018 indicates that something has emerged as a barrier to university participation in the competition, and the lack of compensation (in terms of class credit) for students and advisers could be a barrier to participate.

Financial Commitment

Bateman requires a financial commitment from participating teams, with an intent-to-enter fee (ranging from $50 to $65) whether or not a case study entry is submitted, plus the requirement that each team member be a member of PRSSA at the cost of $55 for national dues. At the height of 84 Bateman entries in 2018, that brought in a minimum revenue of $22,680 from the intent-to-enter fee for each team and PRSSA membership dues for a minimum of four students per team (PRSSA, 2018). Though PRSSA has waived the intent-to-enter fee since 2020, there has been no indication that is a permanent competition change. Even with the waiver of the intent-to-enter fee, the number of competing teams continued to decrease, to a 10-year low of 49 entries in 2023. Overall, advisers in both the survey and focus groups disagreed that there should be a Bateman intent-to-enter

fee. With additional Bateman funding coming from a $35,000 competition sponsorship fee (PRSSA, 2023), the authors recommend the permanent elimination of the intent-to enter fee as a pay-to-play model that places a possible financial barrier to team participation.

Access to Resources

While access to resources did not significantly correlate with a Bateman team's ability to place as a finalist or honorable mention, it can give an implicit advantage to those teams that do receive departmental and university resources such as software and applications that enhance the effectiveness of campaign research, implementation, and evaluation. Bateman organizers should ensure that competition rules create a level playing field for student teams by creating comparable terms of access for resources or program partners that could provide resources for industry software or applications such as (a) Muck Rack or Cision for media relations, (b) SpyFu or Moz for SEO/SEM, and (c) Hootsuite, HubSpot, or Sprout Social for digital/social media implementation and evaluation. Some of those companies already offer educator access or specialty programs, such as HubSpot's Education Partner Program (HubSpotb, n.d.) and Muck Rack for Educators (Muck Rack, n.d.), that can be adapted for Bateman. Ensuring equal access to technological resources can enhance experiential learning in Bateman by allowing students to engage with products they will find in industry practice.

Communication

Bateman faculty advisers indicated a lack of transparency regarding clear and consistent campaign objectives, possibly creating confusion for students when understanding the expectations of competition and how they will be assessed by judges. One example of that inconsistency is the publication of finalist teams' case summaries on the PRSSA headquarter (HQ) website, which ranged from all three teams (2014-2015; 2020), to only the first-place team (2016-2018; 2021-

2022), to none of the teams (2019). Honorable mentions were presented to between 14.8% and 27.3% of teams from 2014 through 2023, though it is not clear how the quantity of honorable mention teams is determined in any given year and how that distinction is determined. While competition tips are provided in the rules and regulations documentation, no scoring rubric is provided during the competition for teams to understand which campaign elements are assessed and, with what weight, in the overall judging score. That lack of transparent and consistent communication could influence the perception that there is bias in the judging process.

To add greater transparency for Bateman Competition expectations of clients and judges, the judging rubric for the competition may be included as part of competition materials, which is typically published and distributed in October. In addition, the PRSSA Headquarters office, which receives all submissions, may expand the publication of submitted case summaries for a broader overview of campaign perspectives. This expansion serves a dual purpose. First, greater access to previously submitted case studies allows universities that are new to the competition more understanding of the expectations of Bateman case study submissions. Second, publication of case summaries through the PRSSA Headquarters website ensures former participants have access to their work after the competition ends, which can be linked within a portfolio website, LinkedIn profile, and other social media platforms.

Judging

Results of this study indicate that certain advantages can increase the odds a Bateman team will place as a finalist or receive an honorable mention. Winning teams were most likely to come from public universities that offered Bateman as a for-credit project integrated into a class or practicum experience. That model also increased the likelihood that a university could host multiple Bateman, thereby increasing the odds of earning at least an honorable mention. While those advantages do

not equate to an explicit bias toward Bateman teams that are solely extracurricular, it does suggest there isn't a level playing field for student teams. As the results of this study found, public universities and/or universities that provide a for-credit Bateman were more likely to place as a finalist or honorable mention in the past decade. A lack of equity in competition resources and student compensation for work, combined with minimal constructive feedback in the judging process, can unfairly benefit teams from more robust public relations programs. As Bateman has significant financial incentives for winning teams, the authors recommend a revision of the judging process to form team divisions—created in consultation with Bateman advisers, judges, and CPRE—to ensure an awards structure that better recognizes diversity, equity, and inclusion of all participating teams.

Conclusion

Bateman has several positive outcomes for experiential learning in an applied setting. However, Bateman suffers from inconsistent management and lack of transparency that can impact the competition's positive reputation, which might explain the 41.7% decrease in submissions since 2018. Bateman will benefit from implementing revised practices ensure a level playing field for all universities that wish to participate. Future exploration of longitudinal data about benefits and challenges of Bateman participation will determine results are a short-time trend or point to a long-term crisis. In addition, future studies about students' perceptions of their competition experience, as well as advisers' competition practices, will add further insights to improve Bateman for future public relations students.

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Appendix A

CPRE "Fast Forward" KSAs that PR Practitioners Agree Entry-Level PR Practitioners Should Have

Knowledge (p. 46)[a]	M	Skills (p. 46)[a]	M	Abilities (p. 47)[a]	M
Ethics	4.51	Writing	4.85	Creative Thinking	4.53
Diversity & Inclusion	3.95	Communication	4.75	Problem Solving	4.49
Cultural Perspective	3.83	Social Media Management	4.39	Critical Thinking	4.45
Business Acumen	3.76	Research & Analytics	4.16	Analytical Thinking	4.38
Social Issues	3.73	Editing	4.11	Strategic Planning	3.58
PR Laws & Regulation	3.60	Media Relations	4.01		
PR Theory	3.44	Storytelling	3.98		
Global Perspectives	3.41	Public Speaking	3.54		
Internal or Employee Communication	3.59	Graphic Design	3.00		
Crisis Management	2.86	Audio/Video Production	2.94		
Management	2.79	Website Development	2.93		
PR History	2.33	Speechwriting	2.89		
		App Development	2.07		

[a] 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree

Appendix B

2014-2023 Bateman Case Study Competition Finalists and Honorable Mentions

Year	Client	Total Entries	Finalists	Honorable Mentions
2014	Fiserv (Popmoney)	68	University of Florida[b] California State University, Long Beach[b] Loyola University-New Orleans[b]	Chapman University Kent State University[a, b] Lee University[b] Michigan State University[b] Minnesota State University-Moorhead[a, b] Ohio Northern University Roger Williams University Seton Hall University[a] University of Maryland[b] Utah Valley University[a] (x2)
2015	Home Matters	60	Loyola University-New Orleans[b] University of Florida[b] University of South Carolina[b]	Brigham Young University[a] (x2) California State University-Long Beach[b] Central Washington University Chapman University[a] Minnesota State University-Moorhead[a, b] (x3) Lee University[b] Samford University[b] University of Georgia University of Nebraska-Lincoln[a, b] University of Nevada-Reno[b]
2016	Student Veterans of America	70	The University of Alabama Loyola University-New Orleans[b] Samford University[b]	Brigham Young University[a] (x2) California State University-Long Beach[b] DePaul University[a, b] Grand Valley State University[a] Kent State University[a, b] Oklahoma Christian University San Jose State University Texas Christian University[a] University of Florida[b] University of Nevada-Reno[b] University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Utah Valley University[a] Washington State University[b] Western Kentucky University[a, b]

[a] Multiple team entries
[b] Bateman participants earns class credit

Year	Client	Total Entries	Finalists	Honorable Mentions
2017	Campaign to Change Direction	67	University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill The University of Alabama University of Nebraska-Lincoln[b]	Brigham Young University[a] (x2) DePaul University[a, b] (x2) High Point University James Madison University[a] Kent State University[a, b] (x2) Lee University[b] Loyola University-New Orleans[b] Quinnipiac University[b] St. John Fisher College[b] University of Georgia University of Nevada-Reno[b] University of South Carolina[b]
2018	With Purpose	84	Louisiana State University Kent State University[a, b] California State University, Long Beach[b]	Chapman University[a] DePaul University[a, b] Indiana University[b] Miami University[b] Minnesota State University-Moorhead[a, b] (x2) Ohio University Oklahoma Christian University Olivet Nazarene University San Jose State University St. John Fisher College[b] Syracuse University Texas State University[b] The University of Alabama University of Florida[b] University of Nebraska-Lincoln[b] University of South Carolina[a, b] University of South Florida University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Washington State University[a, b]

[a] Multiple team entries
[b] Bateman participants earns class credit

Year	Client	Total Entries	Finalists	Honorable Mentions
2019	The PRSA Foundation (Diverse Voices)	66	California State University, Long Beach[b] University of South Carolina[b] Brigham Young University[a]	Brigham Young University[a] DePaul University[a, b] High Point University Kent State University[a, b] (x2) Lee University[b] Loyola University-New Orleans[b] North Dakota State University[a, b] Ohio University Samford University[b] Temple University[b] The University of Alabama University of Florida[b] University of Nebraska-Lincoln[b] University of Nebraska-Omaha University of Nevada-Reno[b] West Texas A&M University Western Kentucky University[a, b]
2020	U.S. Census Bureau	57	DePaul University[a, b] University of Florida[b] High Point University	Ashland University Belmont University[b] DePaul University[a, b] Eastern Illinois University[a] Kent State University[a, b] Loyola University-New Orleans[b] Miami University[b] Ohio University Syracuse University University of Nebraska-Lincoln[b] University of Nevada-Reno[a, b] University of Oregon[b] University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh
2021	PRSA Civility Taskforce	54	California State University-Long Beach[b] University of Nebraska-Lincoln[b] Loyola University-New Orleans[b]	California State University-Fullerton Kent State University[a, b] Otterbein University University of Central Oklahoma[a] University of Georgia University of Nebraska-Omaha University of South Carolina[b] Washington State University[a, b]

[a] Multiple team entries
[b] Bateman participants earns class credit

Year	Client	Total Entries	Finalists	Honorable Mentions
2022	Lymphoma Research Foundation	51	University of Nebraska-Lincoln[b] University of Florida[b] Brigham Young University[a]	California State University, Long Beach[b] Central Michigan University High Point University Kent State University[a, b] (x2) Louisiana State University Montclair State University Temple University[b] University of Georgia University of Oregon[b] West Texas A&M University
2023	News Literacy Project	49	University of Florida[b] University of Colorado-Boulder[a, b] Louisiana State University	Brigham Young University[a] High Point University Kent State University[a, b] Montclair State University Ohio University Oklahoma Christian University Penn State[a, b] St. John's University[a, b] (x2) University of Delaware[a, b] University of Nebraska-Lincoln[a, b] University of South Carolina[a, b]

[a] Multiple team entries
[b] Bateman participants earns class credit