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Journal of Public Relations Education
Editorial Review Board

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Letter from the Editor

At JPRE, we love it when a plan comes together, resulting in a powerful themed issue. In 11-1, the evolving landscape of public relations (PR) education and the necessity of preparing students for industry challenges through experiential learning, ethical considerations, and AI literacy is brought full circle. This issue features a diverse array of pedagogical innovations aimed at bridging the gap between academic instruction and professional application.

"The Kids Are Alright" by Tefertiller, Vaszuez and Brammer delves into the ethical dimensions of AI use among PR students, revealing how future practitioners navigate the complexities of AI-driven communication while maintaining professional integrity. The creative thinking of Riddell, Fenner, and Kearney uses Enneagram Harmony Triads for group formation in PR courses, and highlights the role of team dynamics in successful campaign execution. By leveraging personality-based grouping, this method improves collaboration, reduces interpersonal friction, and enhances overall project outcomes, reinforcing the importance of soft skills in PR education. The teaching brief by Howes on creating a prompt library for AI-driven public relations education underscores the growing importance of AI proficiency in public relations practice, emphasizing both the technical skill of prompt engineering and the critical thinking necessary to evaluate AI-generated content. Finally, the critical dimension of industry readiness is explored by the dynamic duo from Jacksonville State University, Murphy and Joyce, in a teaching brief giving us a roadmap for the integration of job application practice into a PR campaigns course, which provides students with hands-on experience in applying for PR roles, refining their resumes, and preparing for professional interviews. This approach mirrors industry expectations, ensuring that students graduate with not only theoretical knowledge but also practical skills that enhance employability.

Together, these articles reflect the Journal of Public Relations Educator's ongoing commitment to advancing pedagogical strategies that align with industry needs. From AI literacy and ethics to career preparation and collaborative learning, the articles in this issue provide a roadmap for equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and ethical frameworks necessary to thrive in the modern PR landscape.

Coming soon: Keep your eyes peeled for two special issue calls dropping in the upcoming weeks: first, in what we are calling the graduate issue, is the collective creation of previous JPRE editors-in-chief, Pamela Bourland-Davis, Emily Kinsky, and Charles "Chuck" Lubbers which will invite invite research articles, teaching briefs, and book reviews - we are especially interested in manuscripts that explore BOTH the challenges and opportunities for public relations pedagogy focusing on graduate-level education; then the second special issue, we are affectionately referring to as the GIFTs of leadership which features another all-star guest editor lineup of David Grossman (The Grossman Group), Tina McCorkindale (IPR), Karla Gower (Plank), and more. This special issue will welcome submissions of articles, teaching briefs, and book reviews that examine both the challenges and opportunities in public relations pedagogy, with a focus on leadership in the undergraduate classroom. Watch the AEJMC PRD listserv for complete calls and the PRD community website for these calls as they go live.

Our appreciation goes out to the Editorial Review Board, the Past Editors Council, as well as our beloved sponsors, the [Arthur W. Page Center for Integrity in Public Communication](#) and the [Stan Richards School of Advertising & Public Relations](#) - Moody College at the University of Texas at Austin. If you are interested in joining the ERB or sponsoring JPRE, please reach out. I'd love to talk to you about how you can contribute to our 100% volunteer-operated open-access journal.

Onward!
Adrienne A. Wallace
Editor-in-Chief

The Kids Are Alright: Examining How U.S. Public Relations Students Ethically Navigate Artificial Intelligence

Alec Tefertiller, Baylor University
Rosalynn Vasquez, Baylor University
Matthew Brammer, Ford Motor Company

ABSTRACT

Generative artificial intelligence tools have alarmed many in higher education given their potential threat to academic honesty. For public relations educators, for whom ethics education is an important consideration, the implications of these tools warrant close consideration. Using a cross-sectional, mixed-methods survey of students in a U.S. collegiate journalism and public relations department (N = 256), this study determined that while ethical issues need to be addressed, students seek to use the tools in a manner consistent with professional guidelines.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, public relations, college students, education, ethical positioning, academic honesty

The introduction of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools based on machine learning algorithms has left many in higher education reeling as they struggle to address the threat to academic honesty created by these readily available tools, with some professors arguing that AI is damaging the academic culture beyond repair (Massaro, 2023). Students, however, seem to disagree based on their adoption of AI as a tool for their studies. In a Fall 2023 survey by Tyton Partners, nearly half (49%) of all U.S. students reported using AI tools, while faculty adoption lagged by nearly 30% (Bharadwaj et al., 2023). The study however, also indicated that faculty are warming up to the use of AI in the classroom, with 75% indicating students "need to know how to effectively use [AI] in order to succeed in a professional setting" (Bharadwaj et al., 2023, p. 7.)

Although using AI in education has been around for a long time with tools, such as spelling   and grammar checks, digital dictionary, and thesaurus capabilities, the introduction of generative AI added multiple layers of complexity to the conversation (O'Connell, 2024). When writing and creating content with AI in education, the potential for reinforcing bias, returning incorrect information on a topic, fabricating ideas (hallucinations), and creating concern for copyright and privacy violations can all lead to ethical hesitations (Robert, 2024). For students, the basic knowledge of using the tools is a key factor in their failure to adopt them (Schiel et al., 2023). Even losing the feeling of pride from completing an assignment was given as a factor in undergraduate students' resistance (Johnston et al., 2024). Students said they would trust AI more if it was developed by a trusted academic source (Korhonen, 2024). Faculty take the drawbacks of using AI a step further, including isolation or feeling disconnected, which might lead to increased dropout rates. From an ethical standpoint, many students seem to agree as over half of undergraduate students said completing assignments or exams using AI tools is a form of cheating or plagiarism (Nam, 2023).

Despite these challenges, the integration of AI in public relations education presents numerous opportunities for public relations professionals. Cision suggests that public relations firms and practitioners can ethically use a range of applications, including chatbots, social media automation, content creation, and sentiment analysis (O'Connell, 2024). In education, AI allows faculty to develop more personalized and adaptive learning experiences, enhance education quality, and prepare students for the evolving landscape of public relations (Bond et al., 2024). Still, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) cautions practitioners in their guidance on the ethical use of AI that while AI presents many opportunities, human oversight is a must (Staley et al., 2023). According to a report from The Department of Educational Technology, balancing human and computer input, protecting students' privacy, and focusing on building trust are important directives in implementing AI into the classroom (Cardona et al., 2023). Similarly, the PR Council's (2023) AI Guidelines emphasizes the need for proper and full sourcing, identifying and avoiding biases, and maintaining transparency as recommendations for public relations professionals and directives to be taught in public relations classes.

This new study aims to examine how U.S. public relations students use AI in the classroom and how their ethical perceptions influence their adoption. Are there differences between public relations students and non-public relations students regarding the ethical considerations of AI use, and what are the broader implications for public relations education? Using a mixed-methods approach based on an online survey administered to students completing courses in an undergraduate journalism and public relations program, this study seeks to better understand public relations students' current knowledge and perceptions of how AI can be utilized, their ethical positioning, and their use of AI in the classroom.

Literature Review

The Role of Ethics in Public Relations

Public relations educators and professionals place a high priority on the ethical practice of public relations. The PRSA's Code of Ethics sets forth principles and guidelines built on core values such as advocacy, honesty, loyalty, professional development, and objectivity, which are reinforced in the PRSA professional and student chapters, annual programming, conferences, and in the accreditation program (Public Relations Society of America, n.d.). Despite all these efforts, recent results from the 2023 Commission on Public Relations Education (CPRE) report indicate new professionals are not adequately prepared in ethics. According to the 2023 CPRE report, "ethics was ranked third among the most desired knowledge, skills, and abilities for entry-level practitioners. However, practitioners indicated that entry-level practitioners are not meeting their expectations in this area," (Bortree et al., 2023, p. 70). This report cited similar results to the 2017 CPRE report, which indicates that little progress has been made in terms of ethics education (Commission on Public Relations Education, 2018).

Academic dishonesty is a major concern in higher education, especially with cheating and plagiarism, which are the most common unethical behaviors among college students (McCabe et al., 2012). Now with the proliferation of AI, the temptation and ease to cheat and plagiarize has heightened as students become more technologically savvy (Brown, 2019.)

As new and continuing ethical challenges emerge in the public relations industry, especially around areas of AI, it's important to examine how college students who are preparing to enter the industry are navigating this new terrain and how ethics plays a role in their decision-making and critical thinking skills. The need to prepare students for an increasingly complex communications world begins in the classroom. This

corresponds to one of the key findings from the ethics chapter in the CPRE 2023 report, which explains that both educators and practitioners highly value personal behavior, integrity, accountability, and trustworthiness and ranked ethics as the highest competency for preparation for the workplace (Bortree et al., 2023).

Teaching Ethics in the University PR Classroom

While public relations educators acknowledge that ethics instruction should be an important part of public relations education, very few programs offer dedicated public relations ethics courses. Instead, many educators are opting to embed ethical instruction into their existing courses, most effectively through case studies, simulations, and class discussions (Silverman et al, 2014). Recommendations from academic research have suggested public relations ethics can be taught through as little as one unit in one 75-minute class meeting (Smudde, 2011). Furthermore, suggested assignments take a broad view of the benefits of ethics (Ward et al., 2020), as opposed to specific ethical instruction and development. However, other assignment recommendations encourage individual ethical explorations through case study narratives (Eschenfelder, 2011), an approach that encourages individual exploration, critical thinking, and specific analysis.

Although the CPRE has recommended that journalism and mass communication schools and departments require specific courses on public relations ethics, most programs have been slow to adopt such classes, with ethics instruction taking place in broader mass communication law and/ or ethics classes, as modules within other practitioner-oriented courses, or through interdisciplinary study outside of the departments (Del Rosso et al., 2020).

Ethical Inclinations of Students

There is a growing body of scholarship interested in the ethical inclinations of college students, with results suggesting ethical education

and learning styles can significantly impact college students' ethical values (Susilowati et al., 2021). The ethical inclinations of peers can also impact ethical behaviors (Joseph et al., 2010), and students who more easily recognize the emotions of their peers are able to recognize peers' unethical behaviors (Joseph et al., 2009). The importance of peer behaviors when it comes to ethical decision-making supports previous research signaling Bandura's social learning theory as a key indicator for students' tendency to cheat (McCabe & Trevino, 1993).

Research on student ethics has been especially focused on high-stakes professional programs, such as accounting (Hidayat, 2019; Lang et al., 2010; Nugroho et al., 2023) and engineering (Harding et al., 2012). Likewise, journalism ethics has been a focus of educational research, with previous studies suggesting a media ethics course can impact students' value systems and ethical outlooks (Plaisance, 2006), and that ethical values can differ between graduating and first-year journalism students (Detenber et al., 2012). Notably, graduating students with practical newsroom experience have less absolute ethical perceptions than students beginning their journalistic education (Reinardy & Moore, 2007). However, research also suggests journalism students are much more concerned with professional journalistic ethics and penalties than they are with general academic ethics and penalties (Conway & Groshek, 2009).

Ethics in PR Students

Early research examining the ethical inclinations of public relations students suggested that while they believed they were more ethical than their peers, their ethical decision-making was influenced by their peers, as well as subjective norms (Pratt & McLaughlin, 1989). With the vocational nature of journalism and public relations, students have an opportunity to learn more about ethics through work experiences and the socialization that often comes from involvement in student media organizations and internships (Conway & Groshek, 2009).

Furthermore, while students who focused on journalistic areas of study (e.g., print and broadcast news) showed greater concern for ethics than non-journalistic students (i.e., PR and advertising), ethical concern among both groups grew over the course of their university educations (Conway & Groshek, 2008). However, public relations students were able to recognize the tension and negotiation between the needs of the practitioners' clients and the needs of the larger public when considering ethical decision-making. Furthermore, students recognized the fact that professional codes of ethics tend to emphasize risk-management and reputation over social good, which caused students to hold the codes in low regard (Fitch, 2013).

Further research exploring public relations student ethics has sought to understand students' motivations to cheat or plagiarize, make comparisons between majors or concentrations, as well as note any cultural differences. In a study examining the ethical motivations of students' tendencies to cheat or plagiarize, Vasquez (2022) found that "undergraduate public relations students are fundamentally moral and use a deontological approach when they judge cheating or plagiarizing as right or wrong before intending to act upon it" (p. 12). A study comparing the professional ethical orientations of public relations and advertising students found that public relations students were more likely to agree that working for an ethical company is important, they were more likely to believe their industry was ethical, and they were more likely to believe the public viewed their industry as ethical (Fullerton et al., 2013). Furthermore, in comparison to Russian students, the U.S. students viewed public relations as a more inherently ethical profession whose purpose is societal good, with collaboration and transparency as key values (Erzikova, 2011).

Ethics Position Theory

Ethics position theory argues that individuals' moral decision-

making varies along two dimensions: idealism and relativism (Forsyth, 1980; Schlenker & Forsyth, 1977). The more idealistic an individual is, the more concerned they are with protecting people from harm, while relativistic individuals believe ethics can vary depending on the situation, society, and/or culture. Ethics position theory suggests individuals generally fall into one of four moral types based on their position along the two dimensions:

> 1) *Exceptionists* (low idealism and relativism) "disagree that morality is purely personal and recognize that moral principles do not always minimize harm" (O'Boyle & Forsyth, 2021, p. 3);
>
> 2) *Subjectivists* (low idealism, high relativism) are skeptical of cross-cultural moral codes, and the "do not strongly endorse the 'do no harm' mandate" (O'Boyle & Forsyth, 2021, p. 3);
>
> 3) *Absolutists* (high idealism, low relativism) are concerned with minimizing harm, but also believe moral standards are absolute; and
>
> 4) *Situationists* (high idealism, high relativism) "do not believe that moral standards provide a bright line between what is morally good and bad," but they are also "committed to promoting human well-being" (O'Boyle & Forsyth, 2021, p. 3).

Research has specifically examined the ethical positioning of journalism students within the context of a specific ethics course, as well as across their college education. Journalism students completing a media ethics course showed tempered levels of relativism and idealism at the completion of the course, though they remained situationists with high levels of both factors; however, journalism students were more idealistic and less relativistic that their non-journalism counterparts (Plaisance, 2006). Furthermore, students in their final year of journalism study were less relativistic than first-year students, and more relativistic students were less concerned with journalistic ethical principles and contentious news gathering methods (Detenber et al., 2012).

Research Questions

Based on this theoretical framework, the purpose of this study is to examine how public relations students use ethics to guide their adoption of AI in the classroom, and how it may differ from other majors. This review of the literature suggests that ethical positioning among public relations college students, especially as it pertains to their understanding and adoption of AI, deserves more scholarly attention. Therefore, we propose the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the most recurring uses and knowledge about AI among public relations students?

RQ2: Do public relations students differ from their peers in their average use of AI tools?

RQ3: Do public relations students differ from their peers in terms of their ethical positioning?

RQ4: Do senior public relations students differ from their underclassmen peers in terms of their ethical positioning?

RQ5: Do public relations students differ from their peers in their engagement in and assessment of ethically problematic behaviors using AI?

RQ6: Does one's ethical position impact a willingness to engage in ethically problematic behaviors with AI?

Method

To address the research questions, a cross-sectional survey was administered to students taking courses in a journalism and public relations department in a Southwestern, private university. The department offers programs of study in journalism, public relations, digital media, and advertising. While the department does not offer a specific course in public relations ethics, students are required to complete a media law and ethics course. Furthermore, students have opportunities to engage in individual case studies and address ethical issues within other existing public relations courses.

Sample

Students were recruited by departmental instructors during the fall 2023 semester and offered extra credit in exchange for their participation. The sample ($N = 256$) was 75.8% female ($n = 194$), 23% male ($n = 59$), with three respondents choosing to self-identify or not report. The average age was 19.5 ($SD = 2.28$). The sample was predominantly White (77.2%, $n = 196$), 10.2% Hispanic or Latino ($n = 26$), 5.9% Asian ($n = 15$), 4.7% Black or African American ($n = 12$), and 2% other races ($n = 5$). Regarding academic level, the sample was 41% freshmen ($n = 105$), 27.3% sophomore ($n = 70$), 12.5% junior ($n = 32$), and 18.8% senior ($n = 48$), with one graduate student. The average self-reported GPA was 3.46 ($SD = 0.38$), and 72.7% had chosen a major ($n = 186$). Of those who had chosen a major, 37.6% were in the journalism and public relations department ($n = 70$). Of the journalism majors, 68.2% were in the public relations concentration ($n = 45$).

Procedure

This study was approved by the university's Institutional Review Board in November 2023. Upon reviewing the informed consent information, participants were given an open prompt addressing their knowledge and uses of AI technologies. To encourage thoughtful responses to the open-ended prompt, the survey did not allow students to advance until 60 seconds had passed. Upon completing the open-ended prompt, students were asked to respond to close-ended survey questions regarding their use of AI tools and their ethical responses to their uses, as well as provide demographic information. Finally, upon successful completion of the survey, students were eligible to receive extra credit from their respective courses.

Measures

Qualitative Measure

The questionnaire included brief instructions to answer one open-ended prompt to assess the students' current knowledge and uses toward AI.

Students were invited to type their responses in an essay text box via a prompt that read as follows:

> "Recently, generative AI (artificial intelligence) has received a lot of attention in the media and on college campuses. Based on what you may have heard about AI, use the space below to write down as many uses for AI tools that you have heard of or have done yourself."

Quantitative Measures

AI tool use was measured using a list of common tools utilized by students generated by Google's AI tool, Bard (now known as Gemini) (Google, 2023). Using Google search, the prompt, "top AI tools used by college students," was used to create a list of common tools. In addition, two options were included: "I have used other AI tools, but none of these," and, "I have never used AI tools." Respondents who selected these options were not able to select the other options; however, respondents could pick multiple options of the other tools. The complete list of tools and their frequencies are included in Table 1.

Table 1

Frequency of Artificial Intelligence Tool Use

AI Tool	Frequency	Percentage
Chat GPT	184	71.9%
EssayGrader	15	5.9%
Google Bard	13	5.1%
Firefly	4	1.6%
Stepwise Math	3	1.2%
Khanmigo	1	0.4%
Copyscape	1	0.4%
Other AI Tools	21	8.2%
Never Used AI Tools	49	19.1%

Note. Percentage is of the total respondents ($N = 256$) who indicated they used each tool.

For each tool selected by respondents, they were then asked how often they used each tool on a six-point scale ranging from "only used once" to "very frequently." The scores for each tool's use were then summed to create an AI-use index (M = 3.33, SD = 1.90), with larger scores indicating more overall AI tool use.

To measure common uses of AI tools by students, the AI tool ChatGPT (OpenAI, 2023) was used to produce a list of behaviors. The following prompt was entered into ChatGPT:
"You are a professor conducting research into college students' usage of AI tools. Create a list of the top 10 ways college students are using AI bots, and provide references."

From the list generated by ChatGPT, seven items were selected to be included in the final study. For each behavior, students were asked how often they use AI to engage in each activity, measured on a seven-point scale ranging from "never" to "very frequently." Respondents were then asked if they believed engaging in each activity constituted cheating (academic dishonesty), measured on a five-point scale ranging from "definitely not" to "definitely yes." Table 2 includes the list of the seven activities, as well as descriptive statistics for each measure.

Table 2

Descriptives of Academic Artificial Intelligence Behavior and Attitudes

Behaviors	How often do you use AI to do the following activities?		Do you think using AI tools to do the following is cheating (academic dishonesty)?	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Create essays or papers for class	1.64	1.28	4.24	1.03
Help with grammar, spelling, and style for writing assignments	3.30	2.10	1.94	1.08
Generate answers to questions on take-home tests	1.62	1.34	4.14	1.22
Generate ideas for writing	2.97	1.97	2.18	1.10
Find research for class papers	2.20	1.79	2.38	1.18
Help with studying and study habits	2.37	1.92	1.58	0.87
Provide tutoring assistance	2.39	1.92	1.63	0.88

Ethical positioning was measured using the short Forsyth Ethical Positioning Questionnaire (FEPQ-5) (O'Boyle & Forsyth, 2021). Both idealism and relativism were measured with five-item scales with 5-point, Likert measures ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Idealism was measured with items including, "One should never psychologically or physically harm another person," and, "The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained" ($M = 3.99$, $SD = 0.72$, $\alpha = .85$). Relativism was measured with items including, "What is ethical varies from one situation and society to another," and, "Questions of what is ethical for everyone can never be resolved since what is moral or immoral is up to the individual" ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 0.77$, $\alpha = .82$).

To assess social desirability bias, overclaiming was measured (Joseph et al., 2009; Randall & Fernandes, 1991). Respondents were asked to indicate how familiar they were with five different consumer goods in four different categories: 1) newly released movies, 2) products, 3) television programs, and 4) designer labels. For each category, three of the options were actual goods, and two were fake. For instance, the movie category included three actual movies released at the time of the survey: The Marvels, Napoleon, and Wish; as well as two fake movies: Turned to Gold, and Katherine's Mistake. Responses were measured on a five-point scale ranging from "not familiar at all" to "very familiar." Responses to the eight fake items were summed to create an overclaiming index, with the lowest possible score being 8, and the highest possible score being 40. On average, respondents did not exhibit excessive overclaiming ($M = 11.19$, $SD = 4.52$).

Demographic measures included gender, age, and racial identity. In addition, respondents were asked their academic year or level (i.e., freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, graduate student), self-reported GPA, and whether or not they had chosen a major. For those who had chosen a major, they were asked if they were a journalism major, and if they

were a journalism major, they were asked their concentration (e.g., public relations, broadcast, advertising, etc.)

Results

Knowledge and Attitudes Toward AI

Research question one sought to understand students' current knowledge and adoption of AI tools by asking an open-ended question. The open-ended question was analyzed using procedures described by Miles & Huberman (1994) for qualitative data analysis, which involves breaking down the data into three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The researchers examined the 256 individual responses and eliminated two because the students had not provided a response to the prompt, thereby making the final sample 254. The researchers open coded individually and then discussed their findings and reached an agreement based on their similar interpretations of the data. The five major themes are reflected in Table 3, and Figure 1 illustrates the visual depiction of the most occurring responses in a word cloud.

Table 3

Thematic Analysis of AI Attitudes and Knowledge

Top Five Themes	Selected Thematic Keywords	Frequency
Study assistance	Answers to questions, research, outline, summaries, understanding a topic, homework, solving math, grammar, spelling, punctuation, citations, translations, editing	167 (65.23%)
Written content	Essays, articles, emails, social media, resumes, news stories, letters, podcasts, press releases	117 (45.70%)
AI tools	Chat GPT, Snapchat AI, Grammarly, Open AI, Packback, Quizlet, Claude, Siri, Google AI, Tela Type, Notion, Jasper, Google Bard	106 (41.41%)
Creative outlets	Ideation, images, graphics, art design, music composition, photo editing, websites, gaming, movie/TV, animation	94 (36.72%)
Cheating	Fake images & videos, voice manipulation, fabricate famous people, cheating, deep fakes	23 (8.98%)

Figure 1

Word Cloud of Most Common Words in Open-Ended Responses

Note. Word cloud displays most common words entered in response to open-ended prompt. Larger words were more common, with words in color representing the most common words.

As Table 3 illustrates, the top five themes reveal the most common forms of AI adoption and knowledge among students: study assistance, written content, creative outlets, AI tools, and cheating. Study assistance (82%) was the most common theme, which included providing answers to questions, facilitating understanding of complex topics, assisting with summarizing concepts, and solving math problems. The next key theme was written content (55%), which included various forms of writing examples that students are tasked to do in their courses, such as writing essays, articles, social media, and news stories. The third most common theme revealed the various ways students are using AI for creative

purposes (48%), such as music composition, creating images, art design, and coming up with new ideas through the ideation process. The fourth theme demonstrated students' familiarity or current usage of various AI tools (45%), such as ChatGPT, Snapchat AI, Grammarly, and Google AI. The final theme addressed cheating (11%) and revealed significantly less knowledge and attitudes about this area compared to the other four themes.

Differences in AI Use

Research question two asked if public relations students differ from their peers in their average use of AI tools. To address this question, a one-way ANOVA was performed comparing the AI-use index between undeclared majors, non-journalism majors, non-public relations journalism majors (e.g., news media, advertising, etc., $n = 15$), and public relations students. There were no significant differences between undeclared ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 2.12$), non-journalism ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.89$), journalism ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 2.23$), and public relations majors ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 1.46$), $F(3,198) = 0.46$, $p = .71$. To answer the research question, public relations students do not differ from their peers in terms of AI tool use.

Differences in Ethical Positioning

Research question three asked if public relations students differ from their peers in terms of their ethical positioning. Two one-way ANOVAs were performed comparing idealism and relativism between undeclared, non-journalism, journalism, and public relations students. For idealism, the results were significant, $F(3,246) = 3.79$, $p = .01$. Tukey post-hoc analyses revealed that public relations majors ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.65$) expressed significantly more idealism than undeclared majors ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 0.73$), $p = .008$. The differences between non-journalism ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 0.73$) and journalism ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 0.64$) majors and the other groups were not significant, $p > .05$. For relativism, the results were significant, as well, $F(3,245) = 4.04$, $p = .008$. Tukey post-hoc analyses revealed that public relations students ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 0.76$) were less relativistic than undeclared majors ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 0.73$). There

were not significant differences between non-journalism ($M = 3.26$, $SD = 0.79$) and journalism ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.68$) majors and the other groups, p > .05. To address the research question, public relations students are more idealistic and less relativistic than their peers who had not yet declared a major.

Research question four asked if senior public relations students differ from their underclassmen public relations peers in terms of their ethical positioning. To address this research question, independent samples t-tests were performed comparing idealism and relativism between senior public relations majors and non-senior public relations majors (e.g., freshman, sophomore, and junior). For idealism, there were no significant differences between seniors ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.71$) and non-seniors ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.62$), $t(42) = -0.13$, $p = .90$. Likewise, for relativism, there were no significant differences between seniors ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 0.82$) and non-seniors ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 0.69$), $t(41) = 1.50$, $p = .14$. To answer the research question, public relations senior students do not differ from public relations underclassmen in terms of ethical positioning.

Predictors of Ethical Behaviors and Attitudes

Research question five asked if public relations students differ from their peers in their engagement in ethically questionable uses of AI, and if they differ from their peers in their assessment of ethically dubious behaviors. Research question six asked if their ethical position impacts their willingness to engage in ethically dubious behaviors with AI. To address these final two research questions, a series of hierarchical linear regressions were utilized predicting engagement in AI behaviors that would be interpreted as cheating, as well as participants' opinions that these behaviors constituted cheating. Table 4 presents the results of the regressions.

Table 4

Hierarchical Regressions Predicting Ethical Behaviors and Attitudes

	Frequency of Using AI Tools						Perception of Behavior as Cheating					
	Create essays or papers for class			Generate answers to questions on take-home tests			Create essays or papers for class			Generate answers to questions on take-home tests		
Variables	*B*	*SE*	*β*	*B*	*SD*	*β*	*B*	*SD*	*β*	*B*	*SD*	*β*
Step 1												
GPA	-0.19	0.21	-.06	-0.24	0.22	-0.07	0.12	0.17	0.05	0.07	0.20	0.02
Overclaiming	0.03	0.02	0.12	0.03	0.02	0.11	-0.04	0.01	-0.15*	-0.04	0.02	-0.14*
R^2		.02			.02			.03			.02	
F		2.22			2.00			3.20*			2.60	
Step 2												
GPA	-0.16	0.21	-0.05	-0.29	0.22	-0.08	0.13	0.17	0.05	0.06	0.20	0.02
Overclaiming	0.03	0.02	0.11	0.03	0.02	0.11	-0.04	0.01	-0.16*	-0.04	0.02	-0.15*
Undeclared	-0.35	0.25	-0.12	0.30	0.26	0.10	-0.30	0.20	-0.13	-0.05	0.24	-0.02
Non-Journalism	-0.63	0.23	-0.24**	-0.23	0.24	-0.09	0.07	0.18	0.03	0.09	0.21	0.04
Journalism	-0.46	0.34	-0.10	0.32	0.36	0.07	0.27	0.27	0.07	0.37	0.32	0.08
ΔR^2		.03			.03			.03			.01	
ΔF		2.63			2.67*			2.51			.70	
Step 3												
GPA	-0.17	0.22	-0.05	-0.24	0.23	-0.07	0.12	0.18	0.05	0.08	0.21	0.03
Overclaiming	0.03	0.02	0.10	0.03	0.02	0.10	-0.04	0.01	-0.16*	-0.04	0.02	-0.15*
Undeclared	-0.44	0.26	-0.15	0.21	0.28	0.07	-0.26	0.21	-0.11	-0.09	0.25	-0.03
Non-Journalism	-0.68	0.23	-0.26**	-0.27	0.24	-0.10	0.09	0.19	0.04	0.07	0.22	0.03
Journalism	-0.46	0.34	-0.10	-0.07	0.36	0.06	0.28	0.28	0.07	0.34	0.33	0.08
Idealism	-0.29	0.12	-0.16*	0.11	0.12	-0.04	0.08	0.10	0.05	-0.02	0.11	-0.01
Relativism	-0.10	0.11	-0.06		0.12	0.06	0.00	0.09	0.00	0.05	0.11	0.03
ΔR^2		.03			.004			.003			.001	
ΔF		4.09*			.49			.34			0.11	

*Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$*

Step one of each regression entered control variables. Self-reported GPA was utilized as a control, as prior research has shown its association with academic dishonesty (Cuadrado et al., 2019). Overclaiming was

also utilized as a control, to address the impact of social desirability, consistent with previous research (Randall & Fernandes, 1991). Step two of each regression entered the majors, dummy coded as undeclared, non-journalism majors, and non-public relations journalism majors, with public relations majors as the reference. Step three entered the two ethical positioning variables: idealism and relativism.

The regressions addressed AI behaviors that would most likely violate the university honor code: using AI to create essays for class, and using AI to answer short-answer questions on a take-home exam. Respondents reported engaging in both activities at low levels, as evidenced by their means (essays: $M = 1.64$, $SD = 1.28$; exams: $M = 1.62$, $SD = 1.34$), and both activities were perceived as academic dishonesty (essays: $M = 4.24$, $SD = 1.03$; exams: $M = 4.14$, $SD = 1.22$). Thus, using these items to represent ethically questionable activities in terms of academic honesty is supported by the participant's response.

The first two regressions predicted engagement with these behaviors. For the use of AI to create essays, the final step of the regression was significant, $\Delta R^2 = .03$, $\Delta F(2,239) = 4.09$, $p = .02$. There was a significant, negative relation between being a non-journalism major and using AI to create essays ($B = -0.68$, $SE = 0.23$, $\beta = -.26$, $p = .003$), which exerted the most influence in the model. Public relations students were more likely than non-journalism students to use AI to create essays. Furthermore, there was a significant, negative relation with idealism and using AI to create essays ($B = -0.29$, $SE = 0.12$, $\beta = -.16$, $p = .01$). The more idealistic an individual, the less likely they are to use AI to create essays. For the next behavior, using AI to generate answers to take-home tests, the final step was not significant, $\Delta R^2 = .004$, $\Delta F(2,239) = 0.49$, $p = .61$. There were no differences between public relations and other majors, and ethical positioning did not influence this behavior.

The final two regressions predicted perceptions that these activities were cheating. Neither of the final steps of each regression were

significant: $\Delta R^2 = .003$, $\Delta F(2,239) = 0.34$, $p = .71$ (essay), and $\Delta R^2 = .001$, $\Delta F(2,239) = 0.11$, $p = .89$ (test). There were no differences between public relations students and other majors concerning beliefs these activities were cheating, and ethical positioning did not influence these beliefs.

To address research question five, public relations students were more likely to use AI to create essays than non-journalism students, but there was no difference for using AI to generate answers on exams. Furthermore, there were no differences in their assessment of these activities as unethical. To address research question six, increased idealism led to less cheating on essays, but not exams. Neither factor impacted beliefs regarding the ethics of each behavior.

Discussion

Like most tools, AI products can be used for purposes both good and bad. Previous research has shown that there are legitimate ways to use technology for studying and learning, and there are ways to use them to cheat and plagiarize on academic work (Brown, 2019; McMurtrie, 2023). This is why it's important for students and educators to remain actively engaged in ongoing education and training in ethics, especially around AI (Pollack, 2024).

The qualitative data that emerged from the open-ended question about students' current knowledge and uses of AI revealed that students are mostly using AI for good educational purposes. As Table 3 illustrates, the top five themes reveal the most common forms of AI knowledge or adoption among college students: study assistance, written content, AI tools, creative outlets, and cheating. However, upon closer examination of these five themes, it appears that cheating is identified as the least frequent theme, indicating that most students may not be using or recognizing AI as a deceitful tool for unethical purposes. Instead, the results indicate that students are using AI in productive and educational ways to help them be successful in their academic work. While these findings indicate students' current knowledge and uses of AI, it doesn't clearly provide additional insights about their specific application or context. In other words, simply

using AI tools does not automatically mean one is engaging in academic dishonesty; it depends on how the tools are used (Easton, 2023). This falls in line with Coffey's (2023) insights, which explain that the application of AI tools depends heavily on how often they are using it and in what capacity. For example, this study revealed that daily users mainly use AI for summarizing text and findings answers to questions, whereas non-daily users are using it primarily to facilitate understanding of complex topics and assist in writing assignments. Furthermore, the open-ended responses do not provide additional elaboration beyond what is written. For example, when a student indicated that they used ChatGPT to write essays, it is not clear what their process was or the end result. Did they use the AI tool to configure a rough draft and then edit and rewrite it in their own voice before submitting the assignment for a grade? These specific actions or steps are not included in the open-ended responses, which opens the door for further inquiry to examine students' application processes and overall experiences using AI in and outside of the classroom.

Overall, these top qualitative themes mostly indicate that students are acclimating quite well to this new technology and will most likely be in a good position to continue to work with AI as a complementary, functional tool. With students being digital natives and early adopters of new technology, it's no surprise that they have surpassed faculty in adopting AI tools. In fact, a survey by Statista found that 65% of U.S. undergraduate students already reported that AI will have a positive impact on their learning (Korhonen, 2024). Perhaps more importantly, these findings closely mirror what is currently happening within the public relations industry. For example, the 2024 IPR AI Report revealed that communication leaders are primarily using AI for productive and efficient processes, such as brainstorming, generating ideas, summarizing, editing, and creating content (McCorkindale, 2024, p. 12). Similarly, a 2023 Muck Rack AI study revealed that 61% of practitioners are actively using AI tools and the majority are using it for writing tasks, such as press

release, social media copy, and crafting pitches (Muck Rack, 2023, p. 11). In both cases, it appears that students and practitioners are using AI for relevant and productive purposes. Educators who are already familiar with AI or are currently teaching classes that largely integrate AI best practices acknowledge that students will need to learn how to properly and ethically use it in the workplace in order to be successful in the future (Coffey, 2023). By empowering students now to explore AI tools and gain the skills and resources needed to thrive in this new era, educators will be able to bridge the skills and knowledge gap between the classroom and the industry. For example, educators can create in-class assignments or activities that pose real-world scenarios with issues that need to be addressed. In small groups, students can engage in critical thinking and practice using AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Co-Pilot, Gemini, etc.) in real-time, and then share their process and results with the class and gain feedback. Additionally, students involved in PRSSA and PR student-run agencies can also gain valuable practice and insights by working closely with their faculty advisors to develop best practices for client work.

The qualitative findings were supported by the quantitative results, which suggested that respondents were more likely to believe that ethically-questionable AI behaviors occurred less frequently. However, it is worth noting that public relations students were more likely than non-journalism students to use AI to generate written output, such as essays. As ethical education is an important aspect of public relations education, this finding warrants further consideration; however, contributing factors should be considered. For example, it is likely that public relations students are asked to generate more writing in their coursework mainly due to the vocational nature of the field in comparison to non-journalism students. It is also possible that public relations students may lean on AI to fulfill non-PR focused written assignments (e.g., essays and reflections). However, it is preferable for public relations students to avoid leaning

on AI for unethical behaviors at a higher rate than non-journalism peers, especially given the importance of ethical training. Previous research suggests that students in journalism programs were more likely to hold strong opinions about professional ethics and were more lenient when it comes to academic ethics (Conway & Groshek, 2009). Since this current study examined academic ethics as opposed to professional ethics, it is possible this dichotomy was at play. Perhaps the emphasis on professional ethics in public relations education, with its reliance on case studies and particular ethical dilemmas, is missing a broader, character-focused approach to cultivating ethical decision-making.

A character-infused approach in ethical decision-making is often overlooked in favor of either a teleological (consequences and outcomes) or a deontological (rules and responsibilities) approach (Nguyen & Crossan, 2022). However, when an individual makes a bad decision, their poor judgment and character is implicated or questioned. In other words, "actions join together to form conduct, which leads to habits, and in turn, forms character" (p. 187). As this study suggests, students can benefit from exposure to real-world ethical scenarios and training opportunities in the classroom through case studies, class discussions, and simulations to "help students critically analyze and solve ethical dilemmas" (Vasquez, 2022, p. 66). Conway and Groshek (2009) suggest that participation in student media organizations, clubs, or internship opportunities can also play a positive role in shaping a students' character and ethical lens due to the interaction and socialization aspects. As these examples suggest, students who are only exposed to ethical concepts or theories may be limited in their ethical education because they are not engaging in experiential training, which values application, continuous learning, and reflection- all crucial elements for character development (Vasquez, 2022).

In regard to ethical positioning, not unlike previous research (Plaisance, 2006), public relations students were more idealistic and less

relativistic than students with undeclared majors, suggesting an absolutist outlook. This supports previous research indicating that the public relations function emphasizes a deontological ethical approach, which is focused on attributes, such as duty, respect, honesty, fairness, and justice (Bowen, 2005; Place, 2010). Similarly, Vasquez (2022) found that public relations students were mostly deontologically-oriented when it came to making ethical decisions, meaning that they focused more so on rules, rights, and responsibilities. This may attribute to why some students in this study perceived AI behaviors as forms of academic dishonesty and identified cheating as one of the top five themes in the open-ended question.

However, unlike research examining news-focused journalism students (Detenber et al., 2012), there were no differences between senior and non-senior public relations students. Given the survey's lack of specificity regarding respondents' particular educational activities, including internships, student associations, and whether or not they had completed the media ethics course, care should be taken in interpreting this finding. Nevertheless, it appears that students are either drawn to public relations due to certain ethical positions, or as a result of early coursework that can shift these ideas. Notably, only idealism influenced students not to cheat on class essays. Broadly speaking, ethical positioning did not predict the identification of and the refusal to participate in unethical behaviors.

Implications for PR Educators

AI adoption within the halls of the academy have left educators wondering what to do about a technology that could enable students to fabricate assignments and tests without actually learning. Although the temptation to ban AI from the classroom is an option, there is an opportunity to embrace this revolutionary technology and learn to use it wisely. This means educators can help students engage in and develop their AI literacy to understand the shortcomings, pitfalls, best practices,

and use it responsibly and ethically. Students must find ways to strike a balance between using a tool that can produce efficiencies and assist in learning, and blindly over-relying on machine learning and forsaking critical thinking and ethical standards.

Overall, this study shows that U.S. college students are curious about AI and are using it for good purposes. The perception or assumption that students are mainly using AI to cheat appears to be inaccurate and could negatively influence teachers' attitudes toward their students. However, this study reflects the findings from one institution that also has a Christian affiliation and therefore is not going to be representative of all universities across the country. While the researchers acknowledge that in some places, educators may be having more difficulty managing AI in the classroom, they still emphasize that care should be taken not to rush to judgment and assume guilt simply because the student is using an AI tool. Educators have an opportunity to embrace AI, engage their students in honest dialogue, and teach them best practices, including ethical approaches and responsible uses, especially since the industry is moving in that direction.

According to the Institute of Public Relations AI report, most practitioners indicate they are comfortable with AI and view it as a "tool rather than a strategy, used to supplement and enhance the work of communications" (McCorkindale, 2024, p. 6). The growth of AI initially cast fear among professionals that their jobs would be replaced by AI, but now the growing sentiment has changed to "it's not AI that will take my job, it's someone who knows how to use AI" (Coffey, 2023).

As more AI tools continue to be deployed and embraced in industry roles, there will be a higher expectation placed upon graduating students and young professionals to know how to use AI effectively and responsibly. Educators can help students develop their AI literacy by working together in partnership at the university and classroom level by openly discussing the capabilities and limitations of AI, and creating AI

guidelines and policies to clarify how AI can and should be used so that they learn these habits before entering the workforce. Several universities across the country have created committees, teaching centers, policies, and are using various communication channels to educate students, faculty, and staff about AI (McMurtrie, 2023). For example, some universities have created web pages that specifically provide information, resources, guidelines, and examples to educate students and faculty about AI use. On these pages, they explain what constitutes cheating and plagiarism, and provide clarity regarding proper citation, copyright rules, and the importance of disclosing when AI is used.

A final implication for educators to consider is to emphasize a greater attention on teaching ethics as a stand-alone course, with an emphasis on ethical decision-making models and moral development theories, as indicated in previous studies (Bowen, 2005; Cabot, 2005; Neill, 2017). In this study, most students identified as absolutists in their primary ethical positioning when it came to using AI tools, which is high in idealism and low in relativism. In other words, students were more likely to endorse moral standards of what is right or wrong regardless of the situation or outcome. For example, if a student used ChatGPT to answer questions on a take-home exam, it would be considered wrong. It doesn't matter if the outcome was positive (e.g., the student received an A), an absolutist ethical position focuses on the action and not the consequence. This can also suggest that if a student uses ChatGPT to write an essay or press release, they are more likely to be bound by a sense of duty to follow the rules and finalize the paper in their own voice before submitting it for a grade. This ethical orientation is a form of deontology, which closely aligns with public relations and its code of ethics that endorses honesty, fairness, duty (Public Relations Society of America, n.d.), as well as transparency and a focus on the process and not the outcome or consequences (Place, 2010).

Additionally, educators may consider addressing academic dishonesty in a clear and transparent way. Technology, which will continue

to advance and evolve, especially around AI, may not be the biggest barrier to ethical literacy. If a student is intent on cheating, they will find a way. The bigger issue for educators is to talk to students about "why one shouldn't cheat and why it's destructive and counterproductive in the long-term" (Brown, 2019).

Limitations and Future Research

A key limitation of the current study is its reliance on cross-sectional data from one particular U.S.-based institution. As such, it only represents the experiences of a group of students from one semester in a specific educational context. Since the sample of public relations students was limited, and the survey relied on a cross-sectional survey where specific course completion and educational experiences were not measured, care should be taken interpreting the lack of differences in ethical positioning found in the current investigation. Future research should expand upon this study to include other universities in different regions, and extend the period of data collection to recruit a larger sample of public relations students. In addition to longitudinal methods, quasi-experimental methods could be employed to further explore the relations between ethics education and ethical behaviors and positioning. This will be particularly helpful as the AI tools continue to be adopted by public relations students. Additionally, this study briefly used qualitative analysis to understand students' current knowledge and uses of AI through a one-question prompt. Future studies should expand upon this approach through in-depth interviews or focus groups with both students and educators to better understand the intricacies and specific processes students are using with AI tools, how they're acquiring knowledge and skills in this space, and also gain perspectives from the faculty who are teaching students how to increase their AI literacy.

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Do We Have to Work in Groups? Using Enneagram Harmony Triads for Improved Group Formation in the Classroom

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ABSTRACT

A significant challenge academic courses face is how best to group students for a semester-long project in strategic communication or public relations courses. This research aims to determine whether using the Enneagram of Personality's Harmony Triads to contextualize the formation of student groups in public relations courses increases the quality of group experiences and the effectiveness of project teams. An experiment was conducted over two academic years: one taught with the Enneagram framework and one without. Assessments and findings are based on comparing data gathered via peer evaluations, final group projects, and course grades. Results show group and final grades increase when project teams are formed using the Enneagram, suggesting the framework facilitates group cohesion, increased productivity, and higher grades.

Keywords: PR education, group projects, enneagram, harmony triads

A meme often shared by undergraduates reads, "When I die, I want my group mates to lower me into my grave so they can let me down one last time." Few classroom assignments elicit fear and stress more than group projects. Faculty assigning these projects are rarely surprised by complaints about missing or uncommunicative members, micromanaging team leaders, and last-minute work submitters, amongst a myriad of other challenges. Student complaints about group projects are as ubiquitous as gripes about campus parking or messy roommates.

While there exists a wealth of humorous tropes and legitimate concerns by students about group work, these projects remain a favored pedagogical tool for many faculty, particularly in communication courses. A vast body of research explores the educational value of group work for developing skills in interpersonal communication, team building, leadership, and decision-making (Colbeck et al., 2000; Kim et al., 2021; Krishna et al., 2020; McCollough et al., 2021; Slavin, 1983). The depth of scholarship indicates faculty value the framework yet share student concerns of practical issues such as loafing members, difficulties in scheduling, and problems achieving student learning outcomes (Ashraf, 2004; Colbeck et al., 2000; Rister & Bourdeau, 2021).

In addition to perceived pedagogical benefits, faculty in applied communication areas recognize the clear relevance of the model to industry application (Colbeck et al., 2000; Kim et al., 2021; Krishna et al., 2020). Professional communication work is team-based. Students will likely start as interns or assistant account executives within some form of group structure further indicating the unique benefits of undergraduate group projects for industry modeling (Kim et al., 2021; Krishna et al., 2020; Wright, 2013).

Despite their common use, the rich scholarship on their pedagogical value, and their relevance for industry training, there is a dearth of communication scholarship on how best to develop student

groups. Faculty who routinely assign group projects experiment with methods, and any approach offers a mix of benefits and detractions. Previous studies have shown few distinct differences in methods (Blatchford et al., 2003; Rusticus & Justus, 2019). Thus, this research seeks to test a method of group formation that incorporates students' skill sets and personalities to positively impact course outcomes and grades.

Background Course Context

This study focuses on the use of grouping strategies in a team-taught introductory advertising and public relations course. The course was developed to replace the two traditional, seminar-style introductory public relations and advertising courses at a regional comprehensive university. Traditionally, introductory public relations and/or advertising courses tend to be lecture-style seminars that provide an overview of history, theory, and practice (Sparks & Conwell, 1998). The course was restructured into a team-taught course with two professors teaching six weeks of content, then switching while integrating combined classes to go over the course project. The integrated course diverges from the more traditional approach in several ways: (1) The course recognizes the industry overlap between public relations and advertising; (2) The course is team-taught by faculty with expertise in each of the fields; (3) The course streamlines traditional lecture content, pushing some topics, such as crisis communication, to subsequent courses to allow for increased application of course concepts; (4) The major emphasis in the course is a semester-long group project where students develop a strategic communication plan for an external client.

While no two courses are identical, an anecdotal review of syllabi indicates that most introductory advertising or public relations courses tend to use a small pool of textbooks, with students engaging in a handful of applied assignments, quizzes, and tests. Group projects are not unheard of but are more often saved for upper-level or capstone classes. This

course was developed by faculty with an understanding that it would provide students with practical industry work experience early in their major, allowing them the chance to create a "rough draft" campaign and students would then refine their skills in a senior-level capstone campaigns course.

A significant challenge the course has faced is how best to group students for a semester-long project in an introductory-level course. Initially, faculty developed a basic skills assessment survey where students self-reported their confidence level in areas such as creative design, writing, and public speaking. This data was used to ensure that each student group had a member with high-level confidence in each area. Subsequent versions of the survey expanded to include students' preferred meeting days and times and preferred communication (online, in-person, etc.). Time was spent in class going over group expectations and provided training and examples of how to be a good group member. The training concluded with a Group Contract being signed by all members with stated group meeting times. At the conclusion of the semester, every student is required to submit a peer evaluation (Appendix 2) indicating their areas of responsibility and providing a grade for their group members across four areas: (1) Service to the group; (2) Commitment to the group; (3) Task-oriented communication; and (4) Conflict resolution. The group project constitutes 50% of the course grade, with the peer evaluation constituting 10% of the project grade.

In the fall 2021, faculty expanded the self-assessment survey and began requiring students to take an online Enneagram survey and self-report their personality type. The Enneagram suggests a typology of nine interconnected personality types, known by their numerical identifiers, with various triads of type patterns indicating overlapping or shared personality traits.

Literature Review

What is The Enneagram?

The Enneagram framework conveys a long history of traditional wisdom validated by modern research (Killen, 2009; Palmer, 1991; Pansksepp, 1979). The word Enneagram is Greek in origin and corresponds to a visual diagram depicting a circle with nine dots evenly spaced around the circumference. Each marker is numbered 1-9 and serves to identify the nine types (Figure 1; Matise, 2007; Sutton, 2012). While all individuals naturally operate from a primary mode, the Enneagram asserts everyone contains aspects of all nine types, which are subdivided into three intelligence centers: cognitive, somatic, and affective (Hook et al., 2021; Matise, 2007; Sutton, 2012; Riso & Hudson, 2000). Today, the framework is valued for its insight into an individual's motivations, needs, modes of survival, and relationship to other types (Hook et al., 2021; Matise, 2007; Riso & Hudson, 2000; Wagner & Walker, 1983).

Killen (2009) suggests that negative emotions–fear, rage, and panic–are visualized in the Enneagram's structure. Rage types (8, 9, 1) map to somatic intelligence, Panic types (2, 3, 4) to affective intelligence, and Fear types (5, 6, 7) to cognitive intelligence. Cognitive, somatic, and affective intelligence centers may be further segmented into three modes of coping: sustain and manifest, suppress and conceal, and shift and reframe (Killen, 2009, Appendix I). One's emotional habits act as artifacts connoting individual histories and their inherent agency and efficacy.

Figure 1

*The Enneagram Circle with the three intelligence centers.*
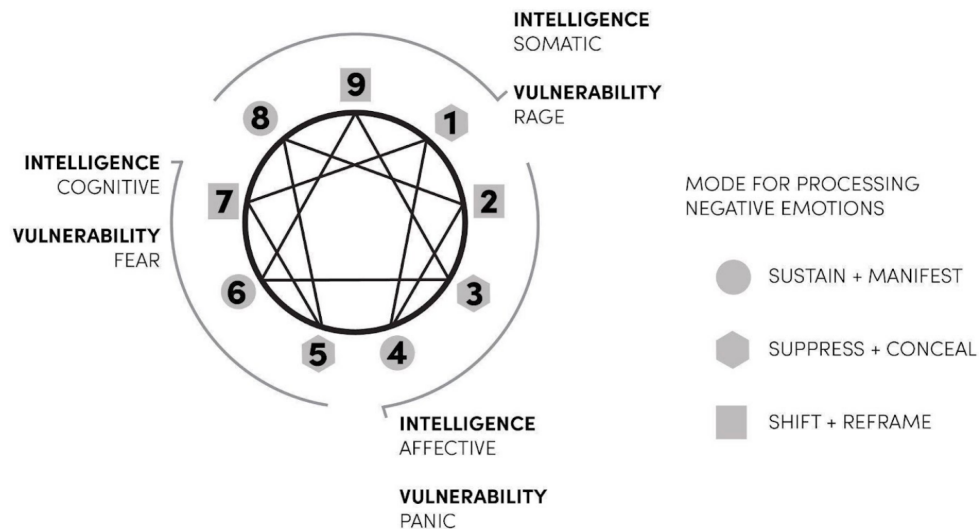
Since the Enneagram highlights motivations, needs, and relationships, typing potential teammates allows students with complementary styles to be grouped, lowering interpersonal relationship friction while clearing the way for enhanced engagement (Sutton et al., 2013). For example, a type-three Achiever is a motivated, goal-oriented self-starter (Appendix 1). Should a class combine an Achiever with a type-four, the Artist, according to the Enneagram, interpersonal conflict is highly likely. The Artist inherently prioritizes emotion and uniqueness, frustrating the Achiever by diluting the goals of the group. However, an Achiever partnered with a type-six, the Loyalist, will experience an affirmation of goals. Loyalists are reliable teammates and strategic troubleshooters who naturally align with Achiever's focus on task completion. Resulting in an Artist as a better partner for a type-seven, the Enthusiast.

Harmony Triads

For this study, student groups were formed using Harmony Triads, a concept theorized by Daniels (2012) (Figure 2). Triads create an organizational frame by integrating models of health among group members while mitigating behaviors like status management and social masking (Daniels, 2012; Wagner & Walker, 1983; Wiltse & Palmer, 2009). Harmony Triads are an essential aspect of the Enneagram framework and function by blending one's coping mode with diverse intelligence centers, creating a familiar, supportive, and low-friction environment (Daniels, 2012; Hook et al., 2021; Sutton et al., 2013; Wiltse & Palmer, 2009). For example, types 1, 4, and 7 process experiences internally and are activated by idealism: Internalizing Idealists (Figure 2). In contrast, types 2, 5, and 8 process stress through externalization and favor pragmatism: Expressive Pragmatists. Suppressing Relationalists, types 3, 6, and 9 process both internally and externally and allow social connection to motivate emotional suppression (Daniels, 2012; Hook et al., 2021; Wiltse & Palmer, 2009). Triads provide an objective foundation for group formation by supporting adaptive cognitive, interpersonal, and technical skill building in students. In this study, Triad student groups were comprised of 3-4 members and represented a minimum of two out of the recommended three types. For example, in blending students to form an Externalizing Pragmatist group, the Harmonic types are 8, 2, and 5 (see Figure 2). Available student types may not permit a fully rounded group, still, they include a minimum of two out of the three recommended types (ex., a group of four may have 8-8-5-2, while a group of three may look different with 5-5-2, etc.). Formulating groups within the Harmonic Triads accommodates a flexible approach to group formation, leveraging harmonic potential while lowering interpersonal friction.

Figure 2

The Enneagram Harmony Triads: Visualizing Complementary Types

EXTERNALIZING
PRAGMATISTS
8–2–5

SUPPRESSING
RELATIONALISTS
9–3–6

INTERALIZING
IDEALISTS
1–4–7
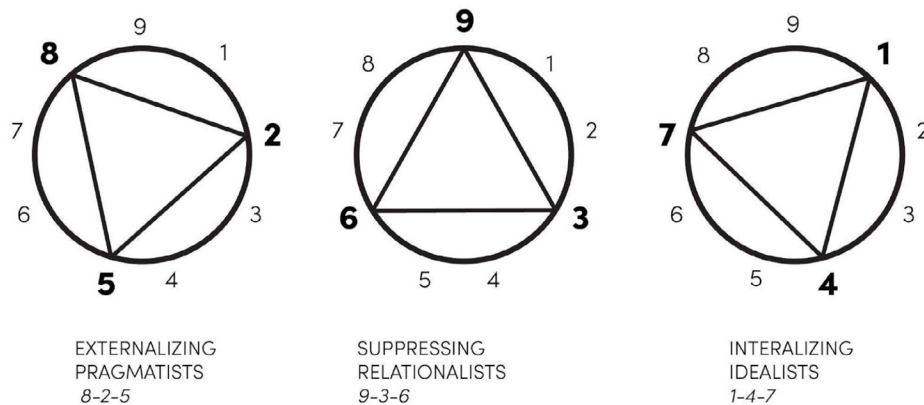
Considering the elements of group formation and personality insight from the Enneagram, this research investigates whether using this approach to form student groups increases the quality of group experiences and the effectiveness of the course.

Learning Objectives & Group Centered Learning

The pedagogical approach and focus for this course call for high-level categories from Bloom's Taxonomy. The levels of Bloom's Taxonomy start with remembering and move to the more intricate evaluation and creation levels (Bloom et al., 1956). The main goal for this course is to attain higher taxonomy levels of creation as students design a basic yet industry-appropriate plan for a real client to implement in a group environment, exposing a pedagogical pain point: instructors lack optimized group-formation frameworks that consider both learning objectives and social dynamics.

Group Centered Learning

Pedagogical scholars have explored the function and value of student groups and/or teams from various perspectives and disciplines.

Yet, less is written about the use within courses such as public relations, advertising, and/or social media. As noted, these industries tend to organize in teams, particularly in agency settings. Researchers are aware of the challenge of helping students envision coursework in a way that moves beyond the classroom (Kim et al., 2021; Krishna et al., 2020). Lordan (1996) notes the difficulty "for students to break through the psychological barriers to seeing themselves operating in the 'real world'" (p. 44). The classroom setting inherently differs from industry, but the use of group projects provides a range of benefits, including "cooperative and peer learning, peer modeling, teamwork, and efficiency" (Ashraf, 2004, p. 213). Group project work is also increasingly viewed as a high-impact practice (HIP), widely embraced in higher education (Wollschleger, 2019). Considine (2013) states group-centered learning (GCL) as a useful training tool to help students build communication, conflict management, and problem-solving skills and have longer-reaching benefits when connected to future professional contexts. Beyond preprofessional skill building, other research has noted benefits such as improved self-esteem and/or sense of achievement and increased interaction between diverse student populations (Considine, 2013; Johnson & Johnson, 1981; Sargent & Sue-Chan, 2001). The benefits of group project work in communication courses are clear, yet the stereotypes about student disdain for such projects are not without merit. Critics note that such work also presents various challenges in the classroom. The most familiar may be the "free-riding," and "social loafing" members (Ashraf, 2004; Colbeck et al., 2000; Lam, 2015; Monson, 2019). Low-performing members increase tension within the group, negatively impact communication, and lower project grades, increasing stress among project teammates (Lam, 2015). Group dynamics, particularly those related to low-performing students, rank as a top factor for students' dissatisfaction with group projects (Hall & Buzwell, 2012).

Providing students with basic training on how to work within the group can minimize the former issue (Lam, 2015). In addition, the challenge of properly pairing students in groups has received much discussion in the scholarly literature, with few findings (Burns, 2007; Colbeck et al., 2000; Monson, 2019; Rentz et al., 2009; Rusticus & Justus, 2019). The challenge in developing teams in the classroom is that professionals are hired with a level of skill and proficiency within a particular area of expertise, while students are just beginning to learn the concepts and develop skill sets. Furthermore, while conflicts of personality or professionalism will always exist, employees generally have some levels of protection, whether through human resources or management. Students in an introductory course are still honing both their skills and their own sense of professionalism and are often hesitant to raise issues. The burden of creating high-performing groups can be challenging, yet the instructor is responsible for doing so, leading this study to incorporate holistic considerations beyond skill level or prerequisites alone. This discussion leads to the following hypotheses:

> $H1_a$: Groups formed using the Enneagram Harmony Triads have higher final project grades than those not in triads.
>
> $H1_b$: Groups formed using the Enneagram Harmony Triads have higher final grades than those not in triads.
>
> H2: Groups formed using the Enneagram Harmony Triads rate their group experience higher than those not in triads.

Materials and Methods

The Institutional Review Board reviewed the ethical procedures of this study, and research approval was granted to run this pedagogical experiment. Data was collected over two academic years, each comprising two semesters: fall and spring. In the first year, the Enneagram was not used, but it was used in the second year. The same two instructors co-taught the courses both years, but only one was part of the research team

and thus, this design prevented bias when determining grades. Students were informed of the research after the group project was completed to prevent accidental skewing of self-reported data.

Participants

There were 84 total students in the two non-Enneagram semesters, with 29% of students male, 70% female, and 1% other. Semesters utilizing the Enneagram totaled 76 students, 32% male, 67% female, and 1% other. All students were communication majors or minors, and all were above freshman standing.

Measurements

The following measurements were used for this study to answer the hypotheses:

> *Skills Questionnaire:* The questionnaire was due at the beginning of each semester, and asked students about the previous classes and their skill level in public speaking, design, and project management. Additional questions were asked about their schedule and, in fall 2021 and spring 2022, their self-reported Enneagram type.
>
> Enneagram Type: This was measured using the free website Eclectic Energies, which was used to avoid any potential costs to the students (Berkers, 2024).
>
> *Final Project Grades:* The final project grade compiled grades for the research report, draft project, final project, and final presentation.
>
> *Peer Assessment:* The peer assessment was completed after the final presentation. This assessment asked students to rank their group members and included items like how well they displayed group communication skills, commitment to the group, and conflict resolution. To answer H2, two specific questions were pulled from the peer assessment (Appendix 2): (1) Commitment to the Group:

made time to meet/honored meeting times, etc., and (2) Team Oriented Communication: Communicated clearly & consistently with the group, was easy to get in touch with. These questions were on a five-level Likert scale from Excellent to Lacking. *Final Grades:* Final grades in this course comprise 50% group projects, 30% exercises and attendance, and 20% quizzes.

Results

The data were collected and analyzed using SPSS 29 to gather frequencies, averages, and standard deviations to compare grades and results from each semester. Reviewing final project data first, the first academic year project grade average was 84.3%, with fall 2020 having the highest of the two semesters average at 86%. Semesters using the Enneagram triads saw the average final project grade increase to 89%, a 5% increase in scores from the previous course, with spring 2022 having the highest final project grade of 89.8% (Figure 3). These results support H1$_a$. The fall-to-fall increase was 2%, and the spring-to-spring increase was an impressive 7.25%.

Figure 3

Final Project Grade Comparison
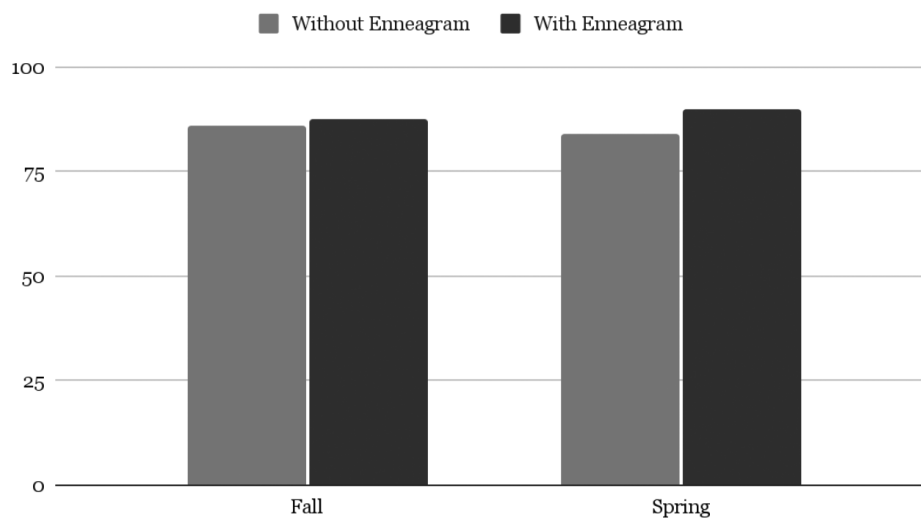
The next variable was the final grades, which incorporated individual assignments of quizzes, discussion boards, and an attendance/ participation grade. Overall, the final grade increased by 7.36% from the non-Enneagram semesters to those with the Enneagram triads. Once again, the spring-to-spring semester comparison was the most striking, with a 12% increase in final scores. The fall-to-fall comparison showed a modest increase in final grade averages with a 2.4% increase (Figure 4). This finding supports $H1_b$.

Figure 4

Final Grade Comparison
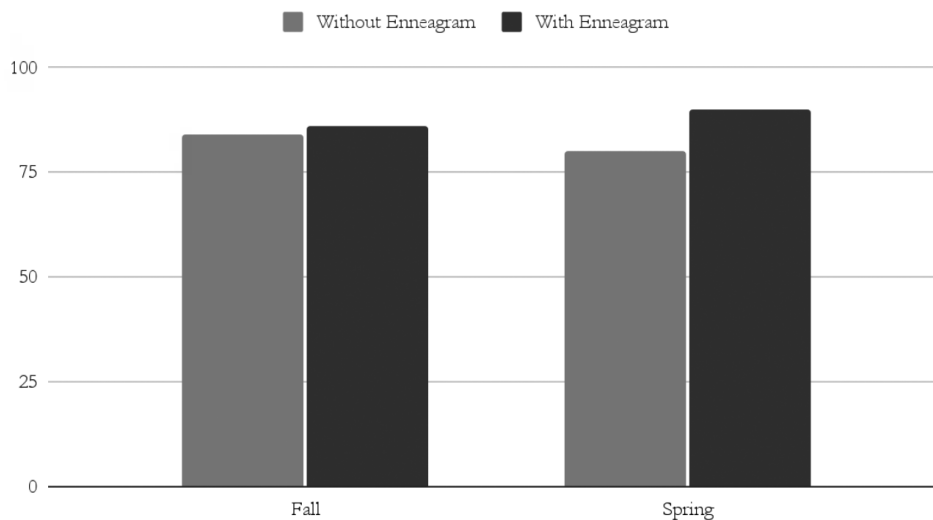
The final analysis included the self-reported data from the peer assessment of the group performance. The finding showed a minor change, as the semesters' average peer assessments differed only by a percentage. The non-Enneagram classes had an average of 86.1%, and the classes with Enneagram triads had an average of 87.1%. Although the peer assessments did increase with the use of the Enneagrams, the percentage increase is not enough to draw a conclusion on this element. Therefore, no explicit support can be garnered for H2.

Discussion

Harmonic Approaches to Learning

The affirmation of $H1_a$ and $H1_b$ illuminates a gap in current pedagogical approaches: the essentiality of harmony in learning. The increased outcomes in grades can be attributed to the organization of groups and the limited interpersonal frustration found in academic group settings. These findings have several implications for group formation in the classroom. As many pedagogical approaches focus on achieving learning objectives, emotion in the learning process can play a role. This emotional aspect is observed in other courses, for example, with communication apprehension impacting public speaking students (McCroskey & Richmond, 2006; Nordin & Broeckelman-Post, 2019). Training students to be good group members provides a more comfortable learning situation, aiding successful completion of student learning objectives and providing higher positive sentiments with the class, project, and potentially the field of public relations (Fredrickson, 2004).

These results expand on the findings in Slavin (2013) that argue positive, cooperative learning experiences are only achieved through incentivized reward structures. This current study shows that applying intentional structure to group formation cultivates an environment of positive, cooperative learning and increased motivation as evidenced by elevated final grades. This study records positive growth of nearly an entire letter grade. Leveraging a theory of harmony through the Harmony Triads is a sustainable and generative practice relevant to modern pedagogical approaches to group formation (Daniels, 2012).

Integrating the Enneagram into group formation accounts for safety and diversity, while the instructor presents cognitive challenges to achieve the higher level of Bloom's Taxonomy categories (Bloom et al., 1956). Additionally, the process of incorporating the Enneagram into the group formation is not burdensome to students or faculty as free typing

sites exist, and the triads are straightforward and provide a starting point for the initial groupings.

These results signal that it is time to incorporate forming groups with greater attention to group dynamics instead of just meeting current industry practices.

Peer Assessments

The H2 results might suggest that the Enneagram had no measurable impact on group dynamics. However, the influence of negativity bias is a consideration as group projects have a persistent negative reputation. The theory of negativity bias is a cognitive prejudice native to all humans that ensures the brain encodes negative experiences with more permanence than neutral or positive experiences (Rozin & Royzman, 2001). Hillyard et al. (2010) found that students who enter a group environment with a negative baseline informed by experience report the same sentiments at the end of a group project. The student's assumption of a negative group experience is further affirmed by previously learned experiences and countless others that find correlations between recurring negative group experiences and conditioned expectations (Colbeck et al., 2000; Hillyard et al., 2010; Monson, 2019). Research also indicates a connection between negative experiences and low group project grades (Monson, 2019). Over time, consistent positive experiences recondition students' bias toward a more neutral, even positive, mindset (Fredrickson, 2004). The reconditioning can aid in developing students with stronger collaborative and interpersonal skillsets before they enter the workforce.

Enneagram Outcomes

This study affirmed the benefit of using the Harmony Triads as it builds in belonging cues stated by Coyle's (2018) research on group culture and belonging. Coyle's work establishes the basic need for individuals to feel psychological safety before fully engaging in

the "risky" behavior of connecting with new community members and collaborating with them to solve problems or to innovate new solutions (Coyle, 2018). Safety experienced in Harmony Triad groups can encourage idea sharing and creativity. Placing students into intentional groups with new acquaintances builds on Granovetter's (1973) research on the strength of weak ties. As a result, new strong and weak ties are formed, facilitating increased risk tolerance and making a safe environment for sharing bad ideas. In group environments, sharing itself provokes idea creation and a higher quantity of solutions (Nemeth & Goncalo, 2005).

Limitations and Future Research

A limitation of this study was the duration of data collection. Replicating the study for additional years would bring new insight into the effectiveness of using the Enneagram in educational settings. Another limitation is the lack of anticipation of how the pandemic may have impacted the results from the fall 2020 semester as certain parameters and allowances were made. The pandemic did reshape much of higher education and should be considered a significant limitation to the experiment in the fall 2020 semester. Classes met with online and in-person options instead of the traditional face-to-face delivery method as seen in the previous courses and in subsequent classes as the course returned to the previous structure in 2021. Yet, anecdotal conversations with students indicate a preference for collaborating primarily through group chat, shared documents online, and video conferencing. Thus, the shift away from face-to-face instruction during the fall 2020 semester may not have been a major disruptor in the teamwork dynamic.

Additional research opportunities exist in qualitative interviews of those who participated in this course. Anecdotal communication indicates an increased connection to classmates when the Harmony Triads are implemented. Future research could test this insight and provide enhanced detail about students' experiences when using the Enneagram.

Conclusion

This study aimed to determine whether using the Enneagram to contextualize the formation of student groups increased the quality of the group experience and the effectiveness of the teams. The findings show that using the Harmony Triads to form groups can increase group cohesion and keep the focus of the course on the student learning objectives, potentially leading to higher project and final grade scores. Although there is value in students learning to collaborate with others who work differently or have different motivations, using the Enneagram in a PR course allows students to learn the basics of the field in a situation designed for learning. Using this technique allows for the class content to be the main focus for students rather than group conflict. Applying a methodical approach to group formation and providing basic training about how to work in a group in lower-level courses will put students in a better position to excel at higher-level courses, internships, and their careers. While some degree of student pessimism, particularly about the dreaded "free riding" group member, is unavoidable, students in this study grouped using Enneagram triads showed a marked improvement in their collective success and increased skillfulness in the field.

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Appendix A

Summary of the Enneagram Types

adapted from (Killen, 2009; Ichazo,2023)

Type 1 - Idealist is recognized as conscientious, persistent, intense, and honorable. They embody a somatic, or body-based, center of intelligence. Early trauma involved obstructing or entrapment of one's freedom to meet needs. Idealists utilize a survival mode that suppresses and conceals rage and will hide disconnection from others as they seek to move to a more desirable emotional state.

Group Integration: Seeking one's standards without forcing them on others.

Type 2 - Helper is recognized as empathetic, helpful, relational, and intimate. Helpers have an affective or feelings-based intelligence center. Early trauma created disconnection or separation from sources of care and attention. Helpers utilize a survival mode of shifting and reframing panic. When panic is triggered, they will generate care by shifting to focus on the care of others.

Group Integration: Successful awareness while still meeting one's needs.

Type 3 - Achiever is recognized as industrious, competent, energetic, and accomplished.

Achievers have an affective or feelings-based intelligence center. Early trauma created disconnection or separation from sources of care and attention. Achievers utilize a survival mode of suppressing and concealing panic. To achieve balance, they should foster an awareness of innate harmony.

Group Integration: Successful understanding of the natural streams of progress and identifying these as unbound from self-worth.

Type 4 - Artist is recognized as original, authentic, creative, sensitive, and deep, with an innate awareness of beauty. Artists have an affective or feelings-based intelligence center. Early trauma created

disconnection or separation from sources of care and attention. The Artist utilizes a survival mode of sustaining and manifesting panic. Artists will stay with panic and outwardly express their disconnection until it dissipates or is resolved through care.

Group Integration: An awareness of their inherent uniqueness renders the Artist's burden to cultivate uniqueness unnecessary.

Type 5 - Investigator is recognized as wise, perceptive, objective, and analytical, with a broad understanding of the processes and goals. Investigators have a cognitive or mental center of intelligence. A lack of attention to or action within threatening situations created early trauma. Investigators utilize a survival mode of suppressing and concealing fear. To achieve balance, they should participate in experiential learning rather than depending on pure cognition.

Group Integration: Participation and interaction.

Type 6 - Loyalist is recognized as committed, protective, vigilant, and creating security. Loyalists have a cognitive or mental center of intelligence. A lack of attention to or action within threatening situations created early trauma. Loyalists utilize a survival mode of sustaining and manifesting fear. Once triggered, Loyalists will stay with fear expressing a defensive and protective posture until the situation dissipates or is resolved. To achieve balance, they must acknowledge and remain aware of the profound order in which situations unfold.

Group Integration: Tolerance of uncertainty.

Type 7 - Optimist is recognized as adventurous, fun, lively, creative, friendly, and idealistic. Optimists have a cognitive or mental center of intelligence. A lack of attention to or action within threatening situations created early trauma. The Optimist utilizes a survival mode of shifting and reframing fear. When fear is triggered, they will manifest the opposite emotions. To achieve balance, they must tolerate the duality of life, holding an awareness of both negative and positive.

Group Integration: Tolerance of duality.

Type 8 - Challenger is recognized as autonomous, independent, strong, durable, and protective. Challengers embody a somatic, or body-based, center of intelligence. Early trauma involved obstructing or entrapment of one's freedom to meet needs. Challengers utilize a survival mode that sustains and manifests rage. Challengers will stay with rage, expressing a defensive and protective posture until the situation dissipates or is resolved. To achieve balance, they should nurture a tolerance for the complexity and difficulty of real life and real people beyond binary definitions.

Group Integration: An orientation toward nuance and complexity.

Type 9—Peacemaker is recognized as harmonious, inclusive, relaxed, and a mediator. Peacemakers embody a somatic, or body-based, center of intelligence. Early trauma involved obstructing or entrapment of one's freedom to meet needs. Peacemakers utilize a survival mode of shifting and reframing rage. When rage is triggered, they will dissipate anger by shifting their focus to the needs of others. To achieve balance, they should hold all beings in high regard, of great value, and deep significance.

Group Integration: Acknowledging intrinsic value.

Appendix B

Peer Assessment Form

Evaluator's Name: Group Name:_____

1. Briefly describe your responsibilities and provide a list of project components you specifically worked on:

2. Please fill out the following evaluations for your peers (do not evaluate yourself please):

Member Name:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Work	Lacking
Service to the Group: (shared the workload)					
Commitment to the Group: (made time to meet / honored meeting times, etc.)					
Task Oriented Communication: (Followed through / completed work in a timely fashion)					
Team Oriented Communication: (Communicated clearly & consistently with the group, was easy to get in touch with)					
Conflict Resolution: (Was easy to work with, respectful of others ideas, could disagree without being disagreeable)					
COMMENTS:					

3. On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 = poorly, and 5= really well, how will did your group work together?

4. How did this group work in comparison to other groups you have been in? (same, better than, worse than).

Teaching Brief/GIFT

Creating a Prompt Library: Applying Generative AI Skills to Public Relations Practice

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ABSTRACT

Preparing public relations students with knowledge and skills to apply generative artificial intelligence (AI) to professional practice has become an essential part of PR education. This teaching brief presents a public relations course assignment, Creating a Prompt Library, that involves developing prompting skills, applying AI tools to a variety of public relations tasks, and critically analyzing AI output.

Keywords: generative artificial intelligence, AI, public relations, prompting, education

Summary of Assignment

Creating a Prompt Library is a main assignment for the course, Public Relations and Artificial Intelligence, taught for the first time in Spring 2024. This assignment teaches artificial intelligence (AI) literacy, develops skills for writing prompts and editing output, and applies generative AI tools to the real-world practice of public relations. Students first gain experience using AI to complete a variety of in-class and homework exercises and then create a "prompt library," a collection of their prompts and outputs, along with analytical reflections about what they learned. The prompt library is a key component of the course because it requires students to not only learn how to use generative artificial intelligence in public relations (PR) work, but also to assess the effectiveness of their prompts, understand how to improve them, and think critically about the quality of AI output to meet professional PR standards. The assignment's effectiveness was evident by significant increases in students' knowledge, proficiency, and confidence in applying AI skills to public relations practice.

Overview and Rationale

When awareness and use of ChatGPT exploded in late 2022 and early 2023, application of generative artificial intelligence to PR work became a topic of wide discussion among PR practitioners (Freedman, 2023; Staley et al., 2023; Waddington, 2023). Along with concern about how that technology would affect public relations work, including the potential loss of jobs, came excitement and interest in how generative AI could be a valuable tool. This dynamic growth of AI technology and its impact on the public relations profession underscored the importance of beginning to instruct students on AI literacy and the use of AI tools, such as ChatGPT. A Muck Rack study reported that 87% of PR professionals surveyed in November and December 2023 said they were using or expected to use AI, a jump from 61% in March (Muck Rack, 2024). Public

relations trade publications, websites, blogs, and webinars began exploring and documenting the application of generative AI for completing different PR tasks, such as content creation, summarizing articles, social media, drafting different types of writing (Jarboe, 2023; Kerr, 2023; O'Connell, n.d.; Wylie, 2023; Yan, 2023. This interest transferred to the workplace, with employers looking for professionals who know about and have experience using AI tools (Marcinuk, 2023). At the same time, a top concern of PR practitioners expressed in a Muck Rack survey (2024) is that young professionals will not learn the fundamentals of public relations and instead rely too much on AI. Consequently, along with learning how to use generative AI, students need to know the underlying PR principles for whatever they ask an AI tool to do. Including instruction or review of relevant PR basics and a guide or rubric for assignments can help students evaluate what AI-generated.

Recognizing this rapid pace of adoption of ChatGPT and other generative AI platforms, the creation of a new course, Public Relations and Artificial Intelligence, was fast-tracked and taught in Spring 2024. The Creating a Prompt Library assignment serves as a foundational assignment for the course by focusing on AI literacy and building AI skills for application to various aspects of public relations work, from writing news releases and fact sheets to brainstorming and creating PR plans, to conducting research and creating social media content and calendars. In addition to being a valuable learning assignment, the prompt library concept has professional relevance as a productive way to retain prompts for reuse, adaptation and sharing with other members of an organization (Penn, 2023).

Student Learning Goals

Student learning goals for the Creating a Prompt Library assignment are aligned with the overall objectives of the Public Relations and Artificial Intelligence class. After completing the prompt library assignment, students will be able to:

- Produce effective AI prompts using different techniques that generate desired outputs.
- Use of a variety of generative AI tools strategically for different public relations purposes.
- Evaluate AI output against professional PR principles, standards, and best practices.
- Create a prompt library collection of effective prompts used to generate PR materials.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the capabilities and limitations of generative artificial intelligence.

Prompt Library Assignment Description

The Creating a Prompt Library assignment involves students evaluating the prompts and output of in-class activities and homework assignments using generative AI to produce a variety of PR materials. While in this case the prompt library was part of a course that was focused on learning to use AI, the concept is applicable to individual assignments, such as writing news releases, bios, fact sheets, blog posts, Q&As, media talking points, and slide presentations. It could also be used in courses that cover such topics as social media content and calendars, events, content and sentiment analyses, and PR plans. In general, students create a "prompt library" to document their work in writing prompts, analyzing the effectiveness of their prompts, and assessing the quality of AI output in relation to professional PR standards.

In using the prompt library, students enter information into a template provided by the instructor to record purpose, Large Language Model (LLM) used, date, prompt, output, and a reflection on each assignment's effectiveness in generating professional-quality PR material. To help ensure students can knowledgably assess the quality of output, each assignment includes a review of the relevant PR basics and a guide, or rubric, to help students evaluate what AI generated. Students' reflection

comments in the prompt library provide an indication of how well they evaluated AI-generated material. The instructor can then determine whether the comments were thorough and address any gaps in the critique, further reinforcing PR principles(See Appendix A for assignment details, Appendix B for examples of student work, and Appendix C for examples of in-class/homework assignments).

Students turn in prompt library assignments at mid-term and at the end of the semester. Each must include analysis of a minimum of five PR prompting assignments. Maintaining the prompt library serves several purposes in the course. It gives students a disciplined way to go beyond typing a quick prompt, requiring them to thoughtfully examine the AI process. They have a record of prompts that worked well and could be used or adapted for future use without "reinventing the wheel" in school or at work. The analytical framework used in the prompt library assignment is applicable to individual assignments involving use of AI tools, not just a semester-long course. Examples of assignments could involve writing, PR planning and brainstorming, social media, and case study analysis. The steps in reviewing prompts and their output require students to thoughtfully document the process followed and critique the results – what worked, what did not, and what they would do differently to produce better outcomes. The prompt library also can be included in a student's professional portfolio to demonstrate their ability to use artificial intelligence in PR practice. From an instructor's perspective, the prompt library helps in assessing students' prompt-writing skills, their progression in the course, and what they are learning about the application of AI to public relations tasks.

In-class instruction reviews the principles behind the AI assignments to ensure that students "know PR" and are able to do what they ask AI to do. This addresses a concern of professionals that new PR practitioners may use AI tools without understanding underlying public

relations principles and strategy (Muck Rack, 2024). Additionally, through the in-class activities and homework assignments, students exceed the minimum 10 hours of practice recommended to gain a basic understanding of generative AI use (Mollick, 2023).

Applying the Prompt Library to PR Assignments

The prompt library concept can be applied to a variety of assignments in different courses, such as PR writing, that involve teaching students how to use generative artificial intelligence and to write effective prompts to create PR materials. Documenting the prompting process and evaluating the output helps students see what instructions and information must be included in a prompt to achieve the best possible result. Since this process likely entails multiple steps, the prompt library gives students a record of their prompts–including those yielding optimum results–the output produced, and their assessment of what worked and what didn't. They can use or adapt the prompts for creating other documents without having to "reinvent the wheel." A review of the relevant PR fundamentals and/or rubric for each PR document or activity is provided to ensure students know how to evaluate and what to look for in AI output.

A news release writing assignment in the PR and AI class, for example, involved the use of the prompt library to evaluate an AI-generated release and AI's ability to critique a student's version of the release. After a review of the fundamental elements of a news release, students were asked to write a release using a provided set of facts. This first step was done so the student's release would not be influenced by an AI-generated version. Next, they were instructed to develop prompts using generative AI (such as ChatGPT or Gemini) to write a news release including the same information, record their initial and follow-up prompts to produce an effective news release, and comment on the results using the prompt library template/format. Then, students uploaded their draft of the release to ChatGPT or Gemini and prompted it to critique that version.

Finally, students wrote a brief reflection based on their prompt library assessing both the use of AI to write a release and AI's comments and critique of their version. This helped develop prompt writing and critical thinking skills to evaluate AI-generated PR materials.

Evidence of Student Learning

Pre- and post-course surveys, evaluation of students' prompt library work, and review of reflections on class assignments provide evidence of student learning. The university's Institutional Review Board reviewed and gave "exempt" status to the course assessment study. Participation for each of the voluntary and anonymous surveys was 12 out of 32 students. All student assignment work was deidentified for the purpose of this study. While acknowledging the limitations of a small sample size and the nature of self-reported research, the author found that the strong directional changes in survey results indicate the effectiveness of the prompt library assignment. These findings will help improve and guide development of future content for the assignment and the course.

Summary of Survey Results

Responses to the pre- and post-course surveys demonstrated progress in student learning and skills development. Results showed the following:

- Increased knowledge about AI: At the start of the semester, only 25% of respondents felt they were "knowledgeable" about AI tools. In the post-course survey, 50% of the respondents considered themselves "very knowledgeable" and 50% said they were "knowledgeable."
- Higher confidence in their ability to write prompts: About 58% of post-course respondents said they were "confident" and 42% "very confident" in their ability to write prompts, compared to just one-third who expressed confidence in the pre-course survey.
- Broadened experience with different AI platforms: Before the

class, students' use of AI was limited primarily to ChatGPT 3.5 and Grammarly. Encouraged to experiment with different platforms through class activities, students expanded their use to include Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot, Claude, and ChatGPT 4 for generating text and Adobe Firefly, Midjourney, and Canva Magic Studio for creating images.

- Greater proficiency using generative AI for tasks such as writing and research: Ten of 12 respondents to the post-course survey described their proficiency level as "expert" in comparison to two at the beginning of the course.

- Greater confidence in using AI tools for PR tasks: At semester's end, nine of 12 students said they would "definitely" be comfortable using AI tools for PR work, while only two said so at the start of the semester.

- Growth in awareness of AI limitations and biases: In the post-course survey, nine of 12 students said they were "very" knowledgeable of AI limitations and biases, a marked increase from two students.

Examples of Student Comments and Reflections

Examples of comments and reflections posted in the prompt library assignment documented that students were learning how to use AI effectively and responsibly:

- "Being detailed and asking plenty of questions is always a good thing when getting a good prompt."

- "ChatGPT made up some information that was untrue and misleading. This emphasizes the importance of proofreading and contextual understanding."

- "Sometimes too much information or detailed input doesn't give ChatGPT a chance to create or provide something you don't already have."

- "GPT has some emotional awareness unlike other AI. I'll try to test the more emotional side of ChatGPT."

- "It is good to give an example when using ChatGPT."

- "I learned that ChatGPT can help with professional writing for careers."

Conclusion

The prompt library assignment teaches basic AI knowledge and skills, while giving students experience applying generative AI to various aspects of public relations. Pre- and post-course surveys along with student work reflected significant progress in students' knowledge, proficiency, and confidence in applying AI skills to public relations practice. Learning about AI, its value, risks, and limitations, coupled with opportunities to apply AI tools to public relations work elevates students' capabilities and career readiness. No doubt, artificial intelligence is becoming increasingly engrained–even embedded–into the day-to-day work of public relations, as it is across virtually all professions. Similarly, AI will need to be an integrated component of PR education. Hopefully this assignment can offer a framework and ideas that can be adapted and used by others.

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Appendix

Examples of Resources Used to Develop Prompt Library Assignment/ Exercises

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Teaching Brief/GIFT

Preparing Students for the Workplace: Integrating Job Application Practice into a Campaigns Course

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ABSTRACT

Public relations industry professionals express a growing need for undergraduate students to be profession-ready upon graduation. As a result, educators must continue to creatively integrate assignments and experiential learning experiences into the classroom that simulate real-world practices and emphasize job readiness. This teaching brief provides an assignment sample to help educators provide students with practice and experience on applying for a job in public relations and how this assignment can be implemented into a public relations campaigns or capstone course.

Keywords: public relations education, job application, industry readiness, campaigns, leadership

Introduction and Background

Campaigns Courses: Bridging Academic Learning with Professional Skills

The benefits of experiential learning embedded in the curriculum or as a programmatic extracurricular activity are clear to educators and practitioners. Throughout the literature, experiential learning in myriad combinations enhances students' exposure to professional behavior and workplace expectations while developing students' soft skills (Toth & Bourland-Davis, 2023, p.15).

A common way public relations programs include experiential learning in their curriculum is through a campaigns course. The recommendation of a campaigns course in the "ideal" public relations education is addressed in the 1999 and 2017 Commission on Public Relations Education (CPRE, 1999, 2017) report (DiStaso, 2019) and continues to be prevalent today. The fundamental goal of a campaigns course is to provide an integrative cumulative experience and prepare students for their professional role (Muhammad et al., 2021). And in public relations, the campaigns course is designed to help students apply their critical thinking skills to real-world problems and help align the classroom-to-practice expectations of today's employers (Toth & Bourland-Davis, 2023). In addition to campaigns courses, research indicates that the student-run agency structure supports student learning and professional preparation and provides an opportunity for learning professionalism. Bush's (2009) review of agency structure noted that for agencies that included a competitive application process and a title structure (among other characteristics) there were greater student learning outcomes thus allowing students to develop a professional identity.

Integrating Career Preparation in the Campaigns Course

Campaign course experiences provide an integrative learning opportunity to prepare students for their chosen career; however, for

some colleges and universities, there may not be the resources to support an agency structure. Yet, infusing some of the career relevance and experiences highlighted in agencies would allow students to explore the diverse career paths and demonstrate industry readiness.

As an opportunity to provide professional practice and mirror some of the experiences of a competitive agency experience, this activity integrates an element of career preparation directly into the campaigns course by allowing students to focus on the understanding of positions in public relations and how to align their skills to them. To accomplish these objectives, this assignment incorporates components of resume building, cover letter, writing, and interviewing.

Particularly, students participating in the campaigns course apply for specific roles within their project teams, learning how to tailor their application materials to align with project role requirements and manage elements of the team dynamics. By applying for a specific role, students have the chance to articulate their skills and experiences and sharpen their understanding of industry expectations and professional standards. For those students with little to no work experience, this can help them better understand the concepts of jobs and roles.

Embracing Roles and Skill Development

Linking essential skill development to career preparation can help students better understand the industry and employer expectations and develop greater self-awareness of their own knowledge, skills and abilities. Students were encouraged to explore roles that highlighted tactical skills, the more detailed actions of message production or those activities needed to execute the campaign strategies, while other roles focused on leadership and oversight as well as campaign decision-making. The 2023 CPRE report addresses skills and competencies graduates need in their transition from college to the workplace. In addition to this CPRE report, several studies explore links to the evolving relationship between

what content is taught and what employers seek (Bernhard & Russmann, 2023; Brunner et al., 2018; Krishna et al., 2020; Meganck et al., 2020).

In its survey of more than 1,000 employers, the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), also highlight hard and soft skills employers considered as very important in identifying strong job candidates which reinforced the value of soft skills including oral and written communication, working effectively in teams, complex problem-solving, and critical thinking (Finley, 2023).

Gaining experience in critical and strategic thinking roles is essential for college students, particularly in public relations and management roles. Preparing future practitioners requires the acquisition of relevant hard skills, like writing and research, and soft skills, like client relations and team collaboration, which are vital for success in entry-level opportunities. By understanding the interplay between strategic thinkers and tacticians, students can effectively navigate role complexities (Toth & Bourland-Davis, 2023).

Using the assignment to reflect a professional application process, students can showcase their public relations knowledge (hard skills) and soft skills through their resume, cover letter, and interview. In addition to public relations knowledge, a professional hard skill demonstrated in this assignment included writing as well as some soft skills, including attitudes and professional critical thinking. A demonstration of both hard and soft skills is necessary for entry-level roles (Brunner et al., 2018). By assuming public relations professional roles within the campaigns course, students can demonstrate these hard and soft skills, preparing them for the dynamic and collaborative nature of the industry. The students also had the opportunity to practice hard and soft skills required for entry-level roles in line with manager and employee responsibilities including decision making, organizational skills, leadership abilities, teamwork and strategy development (Meganck et al., 2020).

Course Description and Assignment

Students must understand the job application process to promote their professional brand and be ready for the industry. Therefore, this assignment requires students to draft a cover letter and resume for an available team position. The assignment was piloted in an undergraduate public relations and advertising campaigns course, also considered the capstone for its affiliated degree plan of study. In this course, students are divided into groups to develop campaign plans for an assigned client. The course's purpose is to educate students on how to develop objectives, messaging, and promotional plans through research and problem-solving techniques to address public relations issues.

During the pilot of this assignment, there were 16 students enrolled in the course. Students first applied for one of the following positions: Account Executive (AE), Project Manager (PM), Creative Director, Communication Director, Media Director, and Public Relations Strategist. Due to the number of registered students in the course, the Creative Director was also expected to assume the responsibilities of the Public Relations Strategist, resulting in four groups of four students. To assign these four groups, students were asked to craft their job application to their preferred position and then rank their preferences for the other positions. While this job application was a one-time submittal, this assignment was carried out in two phases to simulate a real job application process.

Phase One: Framing the Job Application to the Professional Role

Students were given guidance by the course instructor to help them decide on which position to apply for. The responsibilities of each position were first described in depth to the students. Then, students were allowed the opportunity to meet with the instructor individually to discuss their professional interests and which position might be a good fit for them. Some students chose to lean into their strengths, while others

saw it as a chance to improve upon their weaker skill sets and apply to a position that might challenge them. In any case, once the students chose their preferred position, they created their professional brand by framing their skill sets and expertise in a cover letter and resume. Students were provided with links to resources and templates to help them draft the job application. This phase of the assignment required the students to learn how to effectively highlight skills developed from previous course projects or work experiences relevant to the position and how a cover letter serves as an extension of a resume instead of a duplication.

Phase Two: Interviewing for the Management Roles

Because of the complexities of the roles, students applying for management positions (AE or PM) were also asked to participate in a roughly 10-minute individual follow-up interview with the instructor. This extra phase of this assignment helped the students practice how to verbally articulate their strengths and weaknesses based on the position's expectations and responsibilities. Students were asked questions about their motivation for applying to a management position, their definition and understanding of leadership, previous leadership experiences, and thoughts on how to handle conflicts with students (or team members). While no formalized rubric was used to score the students' interviews, students were assigned AE or PM positions based on the quality of their responses to the interview questions and how they made connections between their job application and the description of the available management position. Upon completion of the interviews, the instructor contacted each student to indicate which job they were accepted for and then assigned them their campaign groups.

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Course Design and Student Learning Outcomes

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With the nature of the active learning design of a campaigns course, Fink's (2013) taxonomy of significant learning goals helped provide the framework for instructional design in addition to student learning goals associated with professionalism. Fink's taxonomy describes

the interrelated nature of learning goals, teaching and learning activities and feedback and assessment.

The six elements are (1) foundational knowledge, (2) application, (3) integration, (4) human dimension, (5) caring, and (6) learning how to learn in a course and position students as active, responsible participants (Fink, 2003). This taxonomy also provided a framework to assess how students apply foundational and professional knowledge, integrate concepts taught throughout the curriculum, and learn about themselves.

Overall, participation in the job application assignment was well-received by the students. With these students being seniors in college, many of them mentioned how it forced them to update their resumes for the job or internship market. Embedded in the course are a variety of sequenced learning activities providing students with purposeful and interactive engagement with the job application process. This assignment was assigned to the elements of application, integration, caring and the human dimension by providing them with practice in the following student learning outcomes:

- Creating their professional brand
- Crafting a cover letter to a specific job opening in public relations or advertising
- Assessing and articulating one's professional credentials (strengths and weaknesses)
- Experiencing the job application process from job search and preparation to acceptance

Additionally, the students who participated in the interviews for the management positions gained experience with the following student learning outcomes:

- Interviewing for a public relations position in a professional setting
- Responding to interview questions in real time

- Expanding on personal or professional experiences mentioned in a cover letter or resume
- Expressing expectations and thoughts about public relations leadership

Student Feedback and Experience

Students were voluntarily asked to reflect on this experience and their assigned positions in a survey for bonus points after completing the job application assignment and being assigned to their campaign groups. Students described their motivations for their choice in which position to apply for and their expectations for serving in their assigned roles. While it is important to note that not all students were assigned to their first preference, they had positive reactions. When prompted to reflect on what motivated them to apply to their preferred position, the students responded by expressing the following:

- "I thought this position would benefit me by allowing me to work on things I already enjoy and by letting me become better at aspects I'm not as good at."
- "Being able to use my creativity skills and media knowledge to help benefit my group and to help myself improve!"
- "The Account Executive position caught my attention as I aspire to challenge myself and reach my utmost potential, continually revealing the professional that I am confident in becoming."

While this assignment occurred before the students began to work in their campaign groups, they were asked to voluntarily participate in a follow-up survey for bonus points that assessed their experience of serving in their positions. For it, the students were prompted to reflect on how serving in the position helped prepare them personally or professionally.

Examples of the students' comments are provided below:

- "It helped me present myself professionally and work as a leader for my group members."
- "I think serving in the position made me feel a lot more prepared professionally by allowing me to work on both my strengths and weaknesses in PR. As a person I believe I became a bit more confident in myself."

Connection to Industry Readiness

College students expect to one day be a part of the job search, yet in the process, they often experience uncertainty and worry about career decisions (Arbona et al., 2021). The use of the resume, cover letter and interview directly addresses common student questions about career exploration and career paths and places them in situations where they can apply what they've learned to their job search. The project also offers students the opportunity to expand their understanding of leadership and team dynamics. By integrating their knowledge and experiences, this assignment offers students a strategic and thoughtful immersion into roles and responsibilities for internships or entry-level employment.

Consistent with the recent report from the Commission on Public Relations Education (CPRE,2023) which emphasized the value of enhancing students' understanding of expectations for professional roles and promotion of experiential learning, this activity can serve to infuse additional career preparation into a campaigns course. By adding a connection to professional roles via a job application process, students can better understand aspects of their professional identity. This activity allows them to explore and refine their professional brand and articulate their professional credentials in writing and in an interview situation. These experiences along with the skills they gain in their roles will help them as they seek employment and go through the interview process.

This activity could be of interest to instructors seeking to add a professionalism element to their campaigns course experience. Faculty

teaching the campaigns course and those teaching other courses in public relations can reinforce the importance and significance of developing and tailoring a resume and cover letter to specific positions and helping students understand the types of roles that they may take on in the initial steps of their professional journey.

Based on the experiences from this first implementation, the authors plan to continue to collect data on this student campaigns experience. Additionally, as this pilot assignment was limited to the number of registered students in the course, these authors seek to continue exploring its impact on a greater sample of students can better understand how industry practices can continue to creatively be implemented in the course to help prepare students for their first professional role, especially as the campaigns course remains one of the prominent six-course standards for CPRE. These authors also suggest the implementation of assignments like this one can help to better educate students at various universities and academic institutions on workplace expectations and career planning.

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Appendix A

Job Application Assignment

[***Note for professors/instructors:*** *It is important to note that detailed descriptions of these positions can be found in Appendix B. Also, it is worth noting that these roles depended on the class size and purpose of the course project. Therefore, elements of this assignment, such as the position titles/responsibilities or cover letter/resume requirements, can be altered based on the needs of a course or class/group project, as larger class sizes might add additional roles or adjust the ones used in this assignment. In any case, this assignment's main purpose is to get the students to practice applying for a job while also helping assign group responsibilities.]*

Overview

This course is designed to simulate a "real-world" PR agency experience, which also includes traditional responsibilities of team members. For this reason, students will be assigned roles to help divide workloads and provide them with the opportunity to learn how an agency is typically managed. To do this, roles need to be determined based on qualifications and student preferences. Therefore, students must submit a cover letter and resume to the instructor. Your cover letter and resume must be catered for one of the open, available positions. While not all students will be chosen for a leadership position (AE or PM), this assignment is designed to be a practice in the job application and selection process. It also provides students the opportunity to update their resumes and practice crafting cover letters, while also providing students with a chance to see which role would be a suitable fit for them.

For this assignment, students will be graded on their response to the job description. For this course, students may be selected for an interview to discuss the potential of serving in one of the available leadership positions (AE or PM) for the semester. This is why in your cover letter it is important to craft it for your preferred position while

ranking the others. Then, upon completion of interviews, position assignments will be made based on the quality of submitted credentials and preference rankings. Please note that being selected for an interview will not impact the student's grade for this assignment and the number of students selected to serve in the following positions will depend on the number of students registered in the course. In the case of fewer students, some roles may need to be combined. Provided below are the available positions:

- Account Executive (AE)
- Project Manager (PM)
- Creative Director
- Communication Director
- Media Director
- Public Relations Strategist

Guidelines & Requirements

For your application, you will need to submit a cover letter and resume. The following are the requirements for these elements:

- Cover Letter (one- to two-pages)
  - Examples of how your past work/volunteer experiences help you meet the job description
  - Description of how your skills (hard and soft) meet the job description
  - Why you would like to serve in the position
  - How you see yourself serving in the position
  - Rankings for the other positions listed above (While your cover letter will be written for one of the positions, you must also include your preference rankings for the remaining positions.)
  - For this assignment, all cover letters should be addressed to the instructor.

- Resume (one page)
    - Education
    - Work experience (this can include jobs, internships, volunteering, student organizations)
    - Skills
    - Awards, achievements, other relevant interests
    - Professional headshot (optional for this assignment)

Students do not need to include any personal identification (email, phone, address) for this assignment.

Provided below are some links to templates/examples and other helpful information about drafting effective cover letters and resumes for job applications:

*[**Note for professors/instructors**: Links to preferred resources can be listed here.]*

Students will be graded for this assignment based on their response to the job, brand consistency, meeting assignment requirements, and writing skills. The cover letter and resume will be submitted in Canvas as one assignment.

Appendix B

Descriptions for Job Positions

*[***Note for professors/instructors***: This appendix contains the descriptions for the job positions used in this assignment. It is important to note that, as with the information in Appendix A, this information can also be adapted to better suit the purpose and size of other similar courses. It is also important to note that the balance of responsibilities assigned to these roles may vary based on a student group's collaborations, strengths, and/ or weaknesses.]*

Account Executive (AE)

This management position serves as the main client contact, oversees copywriting, and primary campaign research. The AE also oversees group deadlines and client audit, including SWOT and situational analyses. Some skills relevant to this position may include, but are not limited to, client relations, team management, writing, and research.

Project Manager (PM)

This management position assists the AE with operational needs and helps handle research planning and implementation. The PM also helps with developing a target public for the campaign plan. Some skills relevant to this position may include, but are not limited to, client relations, team management, writing, research, and public profiling.

Creative Director

This position is responsible for the artistic nature and consistency of the campaign plan. The Creative Director also oversees goal and objective development. Some skills relevant to this position may include, but are not limited to, graphic design, strategic thinking, campaign planning, teamwork, and creativity.

Communication Director

This position is responsible for campaign narrative, including development of messaging, theme, slogan, and campaign character. The Communication Director also oversees the development and

implementation of relevant strategies and tactics associated with information and persuasive messaging for the campaign plan. Some skills relevant to this position may include, but are not limited to, writing, message construction, creativity, public outreach, and teamwork.

Media Director

This position is responsible for campaign media strategy, including social media, advertising, and content marketing. The Media Director is also responsible for planning and developing paid, earned, shared, and owned media selections for the campaign and any budgeting items associated with these developments. Some skills required for this position may include, but are not limited to, media relations, financial planning, teamwork, and integrated marketing.

Public Relations Strategist

This position oversees campaign measurement and evaluation and assists with campaign solutions. The Public Relations Strategist also oversees the development of a campaign timeline and any internal or external factors that may help or hinder the campaign. Some skills relevant to this position may include, but are not limited to, campaign planning, teamwork, strategic thinking, research, and measurement analysis.

Book Review

A Modern Guide to Public Relations:
Unveiling the Mystery of PR

Reviewed by

Matthew P. Taylor, Middle Tennessee State University

A Modern Guide to Public Relations: Unveiling the Mystery of PR provides a practitioner's perspective on how to conduct effective media relations using traditional methods to generate publicity and newer SEO-driven approaches to garner attention online. Author Amy Rosenberg, founder and president of Veracity, a PR firm in Portland, OR, draws from a wealth of professional experience to guide the book's articulation of how to generate effective story ideas, distribute content to the appropriate news outlets, and connect with journalists in order to earn placement. Rosenberg also incorporates her observations on the most important qualities for public relations professionals to possess and how to find one's fit in the industry. Public relations is an intriguing career path in this telling.

Content and Scope

Rosenberg champions public relations as a career with an encouraging sensibility that demystifies the business for aspiring professionals. She writes in a relatable style and addresses early-on some common questions that arise among public relations students. These include the following: How is PR different than marketing? What is the value of earned media? What skills do I need for a career in public relations? What jobs opportunities are available to me?

The book wisely highlights the importance of internal communications and acknowledges some misperceptions of public relations professionals before delving into a detailed accounting of how to pitch stories to professionals working in print and online formats, television, radio, and podcasts. The author's instructions incorporate granular details that reveal her industry experience, such aslike the most effective times of day to engage with journalists. Later in the book, readers learn practical tips about modern practices including search engine optimization, content marketing, and appropriate uses of social media to connect with journalists.

The centrality of writing and organizational skills to the profession are evident throughout the text and serve as a strength of the title. The continuous presence of practical insights, including developing an informed cynicism toward newswires, also stand out for their value.

Overall, the conversational tone of the writing and the industry-informed content make reading *A Modern Guide to Public Relations* akin to having a seasoned public relations professional as a guest speaker in the classroom. Students are likely to enjoy the real-world perspective and the light-hearted delivery of the instruction punctuated by occasional breezy profanity. They may even delight in deviations from their everyday instruction such as Rosenberg's gentle prodding about the continued use of Associated Press Style in public relations. She writes, "I'm constantly surprised how after 20 years of fretting about AP style I can still forget the rules. While many of the rules don't matter, some will scream your beginner status if broken" (p. 32).

Critique

PR instructors are likely to experience greater concern with the author's advocacy for the use of advertising value and publicity value to enumerate the impact of earned media placements. With its call to "Multiply each advertising value by the industry standard of 3 - 5 to add the credibility factor that PR brings" (p. 179), the book advocates for the use of Advertising Value Equivalency (AVE), which runs counter to common warnings against the practice. Acknowledgement of these advisements, and other ethical considerations within the industry, are notably absent from this tactics-heavy edition.

Beyond ethics, a clear comparative discussion of the respective benefits and drawbacks of media types could enhance the volume. Inclusion of the PESO Model would elucidate these core concepts more effectively within a changing industry landscape and therefore strengthen the text's value as an instructional tool.

Rosenberg is transparent in acknowledging that she speaks from her own experience. She even states in her discussion of media relationships that "I don't know what I don't know" (p. 174). Nevertheless, there are multiple places in the book where additional information such as image quality requirements and fine distinctions between professional titles within the media industry is knowable with minimal outside research.

The book's overall reliance on a first-person telling, evidenced by the absence of an index or reference section, ultimately proves to be a shortcoming. Rather than incorporate outside perspectives and concepts, the text guides readers to Rosenberg's podcast to learn more about the topics presented. This is problematic for anyone wanting to use the book in an educational context.

Audience and Conclusion

The easy readability of *A Modern Guide to Public Relations: Unveiling the Mystery of PR* and its incorporation of industry-informed insights make the text a helpful resource for the educator seeking a quick primer or a refresher on media relations. The book is less useful as an assigned textbook for students given the absence of key concepts within public relations education and the inclusion of advice that runs counter to common teachings. While it is important to challenge conventional wisdom, one must articulate the thinking behind that wisdom to provide an effective counterargument. Given these realities, the text could serve as additional recommended reading for students alongside other industry resources like trade journals and blogs.