Certificate in Public Relations and Communications Management

Looking for a Career in Public Relations?

If you are interested in building relationships and communicating for results, you will find a public relations career both inspiring and rewarding. Joining the world of professional communicators can offer you an opportunity to learn about and help guide the success of organizations in many fields.

Organizations, whether in the private, public or not-for-profit sector, are facing an increasing need to communicate strategically with their stakeholders – employees, media, local community, shareholders, government regulators and many others on whom their success, even existence, depends. Transparency is being demanded publicly in matters of governance, financial reporting, social responsibility, and client services, to name but a few.

As a public relations professional, you will help to build relationships with these stakeholders. Your tools may be many and varied, depending on the type of organization, but will often include organizational websites, blogs, social media tracking, news releases, speeches, employee newsletters, or events such as employee presentations, annual meetings, news conferences, on-line briefings, tours, and public displays.

How can a McGill Program prepare you for a career in Public Relations?

The field of Public Relations and Communications Management has been changing dramatically in recent years. Digital (including social) media is changing the way public and organizations communicate. Increased consciousness by companies of their social responsibility and a need for greater accountability to stakeholders have led to an awareness in both the corporate and not-for-profit sector that organizations need to rely on the advice and services of well-trained professional communicators. The program content is continually updated with best practices from industry professionals.

The Certificate in Public Relations and Communications Management is both student-oriented and professionally based. Professionally based, because its content is kept up to date with best practices in industry, and is frequently augmented by ongoing research in communications.

As a student, you will be trained for an entry-level position in the growing field of public relations and communications. If you already have some experience in the field, you can gain further knowledge and practice in new areas of the industry. You will have opportunities to discuss communications strategies with practitioners from a variety of industry sectors and to work on real public relations cases. By the time you have completed the program, you will have an in-depth overview of the major practice areas, considerable hands-on experience, and a solid resource network.
Which of McGill’s Public Relations Management programs is for you?

Which of the McGill offerings in Public Relations Management programs is right for me?

Do you have a Bachelor’s Degree?

NO

Certificate in Public Relations and Communications Management
[30 credits]

YES

Was your CGPA* 3.0 out of 4.0 or 3.2 out of 4.0 in the last two years of study?

NO

Certificate in Public Relations and Communications Management
[30 credits]

YES

Do you have a minimum of three years of recent, relevant work experience in the PR or communications industry?

NO

Diploma in Public Relations and Communications Management
[30 credits]

YES

Graduate Certificate in Public Relations Management **
[15 credits]

Note: *CGPA = Cumulative Grade Point Average
** Program designed for Managers.
The Program

The Certificate in Public Relations and Communications Management is a 30-credit program, which consists of ten required three-credit required courses.

Classes are offered once a week for 13 weeks and are generally from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Some courses may be held on Saturdays during the day. Courses can be taken in the Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer sessions. Classes in the Spring and Summer sessions may be given in less than 13 weeks. Not all courses are offered every semester.

The certificate’s program requirements are:

10 Required courses (30 credits):

- CPRL 214  Applied Public Relations Methods 1
- CPRL 220  Fundamentals of Fund-Raising
- CPRL 223  Basics of Public Relations
- CPRL 224  Applied Public Relations Methods 2
- CPRL 225  Social and Traditional Media Relations
- CPRL 226  Corporate Communications
- CPRL 227  Internal Communication
- CPRL 228  Event Management
- CPRL 321  Public Relations Issues Management
- CPRL 322  Cases in Public Relations

Note: All courses are 3 credits each unless otherwise stated.

Important Note:

This program is effective as of Fall 2020.

If you were admitted PRIOR to Fall 2020, please follow the STUDY PLAN which you were provided with at the time of your admission.
Certificate in Public Relations and Communications Management

**Course Sequence**

**CPRL 214**
Applied Public Relations Methods 1

**CPRL 223**
Basics of Public Relations

**CPRL 224**
Applied Public Relations Methods 2

**CPRL 225**
Social and Traditional Media Relations

**CPRL 226**
Corporate Communications

**CPRL 227**
Internal Communication

**CPRL 228**
Event Management

**CPRL 220**
Fundamentals of Fundraising

**CPRL 322** *
Cases in Public Relations

**CPRL 321**
Public Relations Issues Management

**NOTE:**
- Required Courses
  - Pre-requisite course
  - Co-requisite course

*Note: Please refer to course description for additional pre-requisites.

To obtain information on course offerings, please refer to the interactive timetable at:
https://cce.mcgill.ca/itimetable/CPD/ProgramDetails/125
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPRL 214</td>
<td>Applied Public Relations Methods 1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Co-requisite: CPRL 223</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Context, resources, learning activities, and guidance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>to conduct comprehensive, primary and secondary</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>public relations research, and assess, edit, revise</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and proofread public relations materials for print,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>electronic and digital media.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPRL 220</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Fund-Raising</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-requisites: None</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current status of fund-raising and philanthropy in</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Canada. Donor motivations, strategies for attracting</td>
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<td>support from different donor audiences, development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>of fund-raising campaigns for not-for-profits,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>charitable foundations, para-public and public-sector</td>
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<td>organizations. Role of donor organizations.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Theoretical knowledge, technical skills and ethical</td>
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<td></td>
<td>considerations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPRL 223</td>
<td>Basics of Public Relations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-requisites: None</td>
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<td></td>
<td>An overview of public relations theory, principles,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and practice, including the development of the</td>
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<td>discipline and its role in society, its function in</td>
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<td>different organizations, and the techniques used in</td>
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<td>the different sub-specialties of the field.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPRL 224</td>
<td>Applied Public Relations Methods 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pre-requisites: [EDEC 207 or CCOM 207 or CPRL 214] and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CPRL 223</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Analyze, plan, design and execute projects that extend</td>
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<td>and hone writing and presentation skills in a</td>
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<td>self-directed manner.</td>
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<td>CPRL 225</td>
<td>Social and Traditional Media Relations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Co-requisite: [EDEC 207 or CCOM 207 or CPRL 214] and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CPRL 223</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Organizations must communicate with diverse publics</td>
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<td>against the background of a rapidly changing media</td>
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<td>landscape. With the increasing presence of digital</td>
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<td>(including social) media, publics are both fragmenting</td>
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<td>and coalescing in new ways. This course will cover the</td>
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<td>context, theory and best practices that are evolving</td>
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<td>as a result.</td>
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<td>CPRL 226</td>
<td>Corporate Communications</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-requisites: [EDEC 207 or CCOM 207 or CPRL 214] and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CPRL 223</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Issues and conditions affecting the communication of</td>
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<td>corporate issues and identity will be examined</td>
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<td>including corporate branding, financial communications,</td>
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<td>social responsibility, the reciprocal effects of</td>
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<td>internal and external publics, and planning and</td>
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<td>production of corporate communication vehicles.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPRL 227</td>
<td>Internal Communication</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Co-requisite: [EDEC 207 or CCOM 207 or CPRL 214] and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CPRL 223</td>
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<td></td>
<td>An examination of how internal communications strategies</td>
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<td>are designed and implemented to ensure people within</td>
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<td>an organization work together effectively and</td>
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<td>efficiently to support the organization’s business</td>
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<td>plan, including the definition and purpose of</td>
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<td>internal communications that add value, as well as</td>
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<td>the communication needs of internal stakeholders.</td>
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<td>CPRL 228</td>
<td>Event Management</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Pre-requisites: None</td>
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<td>Effective use of public and media events for</td>
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<td>communication and relationship-building with key</td>
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<td>stakeholders, including research, identification of</td>
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<td>publics, design, timelines, logistics, protocol,</td>
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<td>speeches and programs, and dealing with suppliers, as</td>
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<td>well as promotion and evaluation of the event.</td>
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CPRL 321 Public Relations Issues in Management  (3 credits)
Pre-requisites: [EDEC 207 or CCOM 207 or CPRL 214] and CPRL 223

Mechanisms by which organizations participate in the public policy process will be examined through an understanding of the social and political contexts where public issues occur and the inherent communication processes at all levels and specifically dealing with the roles of lobbying, media relations and social responsibility.

CPRL 322 Cases in Public Relations  (3 credits)
Pre-requisites: CPRL 224, CPRL 225, [CPRL 226 or CPRL 227], CPRL 320 and CPRL 321; or contact department for registration approval
Note: Students in their last semester may take CPRL 322 concurrently with the other courses they need to complete the program.

Preparation of communication plans for organizations and current situations will provide the opportunity to apply the knowledge gained through the program. In addition, recent developments and methods in key areas of practice will be addressed.
Admission Requirements

To be admitted to an Undergraduate Certificate in Public Relations and Communications Management:

- Applicants must hold a CEGEP diploma (DCS, DEC or equivalent) OR
- Applicants who do not have the normal academic background for admission but are 21 years of age and older may be admitted as mature students OR
- Applicants between 18 and 21 years of age who do not have a CEGEP diploma but have at least a high school leaving certificate may be accepted into a qualifying program (a copy of the certificate must be provided).
Admission Procedures

STEP 1: PREPARE

1. Choose the program (certificate, diploma, graduate certificate or graduate diploma) you would like to apply to.
2. Verify the Application Deadlines to ensure that you submit your application in time.
3. Ensure you have a valid email address and credit card on hand to pay for the application fee (Visa, Master Card or America Express).
4. From the list of programs, click on the program you would like to apply to.
5. Review the admission requirements for the program to ensure you meet the criteria.
6. Ensure you have all necessary documentations required for your application as indicated in the “Documents Required” section.

STEP 2: APPLY

1. Click “Apply Now” at the top of the program page or go to https://mcgill.ca/x/4Um and click “Apply Now”.
2. If you have a Login ID and PIN, enter them now, or if not, create one and log in.
3. Click on “Begin New”.
4. Enter the information requested and click “Continue”.
5. When asked, “What are you applying for at McGill?”, click on “Continuing Studies”.
6. On the next page, select the program you would like to apply to.
7. Complete the rest of the application with all required information and submit.
8. You will receive a confirmation email providing you with a McGill ID number and a PIN. Within 24-48 hours, you will be able to log in to Minerva (www.mcgill.ca/minerva).

STEP 3: UPLOAD SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Once you have access to Minerva, upload your supporting documentation as per the admission requirements of your chosen program.

- Uploading your documents will speed up your application process and is strongly recommended.

- For instructions on how to proceed, please go to: https://mcgill.ca/continuingstudies/legal-documents.

  (If you are unable to upload the documents, you can send them by regular mail or bring them in person to our Client Services office at the address below).

- Sending official transcripts: All transcripts received via the upload process are considered unofficial. If transcripts are required for your application, you will also need to have any official transcripts sent directly to McGill University by mail, in a sealed envelope by the educational institution(s) where you studied.

STEP 4: VERIFY ADMISSION STATUS

Once a decision has been made, admitted students will receive a “Letter of Admission” along with registration instructions.

Difficulty Applying Online?

If you have any problems with your online application, or if you have questions regarding admission requirement and procedures, contact Client Services (https://www.mcgill.ca/continuingstudies/client-services).
Helpful Tips for Applying

What is an Official Transcript?
If you have studied at an institution:
- In Canada or the United States – you will need to request a copy of your official transcripts (your marks) from that institution which the institution will mail to the address below in a sealed envelope with the official institution’s logo.
- Outside of Canada or the United States, - you will need to request a copy of your official transcripts (your marks) from that institution which the institution will mail to the address below in a sealed envelope with the official institution’s logo.
- **Note:** In cases where the language of instruction at the institution is not English or French, you must also send an official translation of the official transcript certified by a representative from the *Ordre des traducteurs, terminologues et interprètes agréés du Québec* (OTTIAQ - [http://ottiaq.org/](http://ottiaq.org/)).

- You need to request **official transcripts** as soon as possible once your application has been submitted to the School of Continuing Studies. Your Educational Institution must then mail these directly to the appropriate office below:

**Client Services c/o Admissions**
McGill University – School of Continuing Studies
688 Sherbrooke Street West, Room 1125
Montreal, QC H3A 3R1
Canada

- **Important:** You must make sure you apply by the application deadline. However, if you have any outstanding supporting documents at the time of your application, you may upload them as they become available or forward them directly to the School of Continuing Studies as soon as possible. Your admission application will only be completed once the University has received all of the required documents.

- **Note:** All required documents received by McGill University’s School of Continuing Studies become the property of the university. Official documents and/or transcripts will not be returned to the applicant.

- **Note:** Transcripts received by McGill University’s School of Continuing Studies cannot be transferred to any other department or program as it would constitute submitting a new application. Therefore, you must submit a new sealed envelope of your official transcripts for each application made to McGill University’s School of Continuing Studies.
Language Requirements

- The language of instruction for most courses and programs at McGill University is English; however, students may submit any written work that is to be graded in English or French, except in cases where knowledge of the language is one of the objectives of the course.

- Applicants must demonstrate an adequate level of proficiency in English prior to admission, regardless of citizenship status or country of origin. McGill University has this language requirement in place to ensure that all students are provided with the opportunity to succeed in their chosen program.

- In all cases, the University reserves the right to require proof of English proficiency if it is deemed necessary. For additional information, please click on the link below.

https://www.mcgill.ca/continuingstudies/language-policy

Exemption by Examination

Students admitted to a Certificate, Diploma, Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma program requiring a pre-requisite or co-requisite course, must provide proof that they have taken and successfully passed an equivalent 3-credit course, with the requisite grade as per McGill University’s requirements, at the appropriate level at another approved institution or have successfully completed the Exemption by Examination test.

- The Exemption by Examination test is not applicable to required or complementary course(s) within a program.

- You cannot take the Exemption by Examination test if you have already attempted the course (a grade of W is considered as have attempted the course).

- If you are unsuccessful in the Exemption by Examination test(s) you will not be permitted to repeat the test(s) and must instead enroll in the course(s) for which the particular test(s) was taken.

To be eligible to write the Exemption by Examination test, you must have applied to or been admitted into a program. (The test is optional).

For more information visit: https://www.mcgill.ca/continuingstudies/recognition-prior-learning
Student Awards and Financial Aid

**McGill University’s School of Continuing Studies Bursaries**
The School of Continuing Studies will post the application form and eligibility requirements for the active term on its website. Please refer to link below for further information.


**McGill University’s School of Continuing Studies Scholarships**
For a list of McGill University Scholarships, please consult McGill University’s School of Continuing Studies website by clicking on the link below.


**McGill University’s School of Continuing Studies Graduating Prizes**
For a list of McGill SCS Graduating Prizes, please consult McGill University’s School of Continuing Studies website by clicking on the link below.

[https://www.mcgill.ca/continuingstudies/graduating-students](https://www.mcgill.ca/continuingstudies/graduating-students)

**Aide financière aux études (AFE)**
As a credit-bearing program, this program is eligible for financial aid through the Quebec Government.

[https://www.quebec.ca/education/aide-financiere-aux-etudes/](https://www.quebec.ca/education/aide-financiere-aux-etudes/)

Note: The amount and number of McGill University’s School of Continuing Studies Bursaries, Scholarships, and Graduating Prizes issued varies from year to year, depending on funds received and their specifications.

Contact

McGill University
School of Continuing Studies

688, Sherbrooke St. West, Suite 1140
Montreal, QC, H3A 3R1

**Program information**

Tel. 514-398-6200
Fax: 514-398-2650

info.conted@mcgill.ca