Detailed Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Tested on the Computer- based Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations (effective Jan 2021)		Percentage Tested
Objective 1	**Researching, Planning, Implementing and Evaluating Programs**	30%
1.1	**Research (Concepts):** Applies primary and secondary, formal and informal, quantitative and qualitative methods. Decides on the population and sampling techniques. Explains instrument design. Develops a research premise and research plan.	
1.2	**Research (Applications):** Uses a variety of research tools to gather information about the employer or client, industry and relevant issues. Investigates stakeholders' understanding of the product, organization and issues. Applies research findings.	
1.3	**Research (Analytical skills):** Continuously analyzes the business environment that includes the client, stakeholders and employer. Objectively interprets data.	
1.4	**Planning (Strategic thinking):** Synthesizes relevant information to determine what is needed to position the client, organization, or issue appropriately in its market/environment, especially with regard to changing business, political, or cultural climates.	
1.5	**Planning (Programming):** Sets goals and objectives based on research findings. Distinguishes among goals, objectives, strategies and tactics. Differentiates organizational/operational goals and strategies from communication goals and strategies. Aligns project goals with organizational mission and goals.	
1.6	**Planning (Identification of publics):** Differentiates among publics, markets, audiences and stakeholders. Identifies appropriate publics and the opinions, beliefs, attitudes, cultures, and values of each. Assesses interests of influential institutions, groups and individuals. Identifies appropriate communication channels/vehicles for reaching key publics. Identifies communities formed through technologies. Assesses varying needs and priorities of individual constituent groups (e.g., investors, governmental agencies, unions, consumers).	
1.7	**Planning (Diversity):** Identifies and respects a range of differences among key publics. Researches and addresses the cultural preferences and/or needs and barriers to communication with key publics. Develops culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies and tactics.	
1.8	**Implementation:** Develops timelines and budget. Assigns responsibilities. Executes planned strategies and tactics. Follows sequence of events in plan.	
1.9	**Evaluation of programs:** Determines if goals and objectives of public relations program were met and the extent to which outcomes of public relations programs have been accomplished. Uses evaluation results for future planning.	

Objective 2	Applying Ethics and Law	15%
2.1	**Ethics (Integrity):** Conducts professional activities in a lawful and principled manner.	
2.2	**Ethics (Behavior):** Adheres to commonly accepted standards for professionalbbehavior. Recognizes ethical dilemmas. Acts to remedy unethical acts.	
2.3	**Law (First Amendment issues):** Recognizes First Amendment as a foundational principle for public relations. Distinguishes between commercial and corporate speech. Articulates conditions for libel and defenses for charges of defamation. Assesses effects of digital record on status as public and private figure.	
2.4	**Law (Privacy issues):** Follows federal law regarding privacy (e.g. HIPAA, FERPA, DPPA), identity protection, ethical implications and digital record. Effectively advises organization on strategic adoption and effective use of technology for listening to, communicating with and engaging priority publics.	
2.5	**Law (Other legal issues):** Upholds applicable federal laws regarding disclosure, copyright, trademarks and fair use.	
Objective 3	Managing Issues and Crisis Communications	15%
3.1	**Issues and risk management:** Identifies potential or emerging issues that may affect the organization. Identifies potential risks to the organization or client. Analyzes probability and potential impact of risk. Ensures organization develops appropriate response plans. Designs and deploys a strategic public relations response.	
3.2	**Crisis management:** Identifies roles and responsibilities of public relations practitioners at the pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis phases of a situation. Acts and communicates appropriately during each of these phases.	
3.3	**Counsel to management:** Demonstrates the importance of providing counsel to the management team or client about issues, risks and crises. Looks beyond the current organizational mindset. Considers and accommodates all views on an issue or crisis. Factors these views into communication strategy.	
Objective 4	Understanding Theories, Models and Concepts of Public Relations	5%
4.1	**Communication/public relations theories and models:** Demonstrates familiarity with social science theories, models and research that guide planning, prioritizing publics, developing messages, selecting spokespeople, and establishing credibility and trust.	
4.2	**Barriers to communication:** Determines how messages and messengers are interpreted by different audiences. Evaluates barriers that prevent changes to knowledge, attitude and behavior. Interprets how semantics, cultural norms, timing, context and related factors affect communication.	
4.3	**Knowledge of the field:** Defines public relations and differentiates it from related concepts (e.g. publicity, advertising, marketing, press agentry, public affairs, lobbying, investor relations, social networking, and branding). Identifies key figures who influenced the field and major trends in the development of public relations as it is practiced today.	

Objective 5	Leading the Public Relations Function	20%
5.1	**Business literacy:** Explains how employers/clients generate revenue and how their operations are conducted. Identifies relevant business drivers and how they impact the business. Tells how the public relations function contributes to the financial success of the organization.	
5.2	**Organizational structure and resources:** Recognizes chain of command, including boards of directors, senior leadership, middle management, direct-line supervision, line positions, and each level's distinctions. Knows how organizations are horizontally and vertically structured. Identifies which divisions within an organization need to be involved in any communication program. Assesses impact of organizational governance. Recognizes the relationships among PR, legal, finance and IT as essential management functions.	
5.3	**Problem solving, decision making and resource management:** Approaches problems with sound reasoning and logic. Distinguishes between relevant and irrelevant information. Evaluates opportunities for resolution. Devises appropriate courses of action based on context and facts. Makes sound, well-informed and objective decisions in a timely manner. Assesses the impact and implications of these decisions. Takes into account human, financial and organizational resources. Prepares, justifies and controls budgets for departments, programs, clients or agencies. Knows what information needs to be collected, evaluated, disseminated, and retained. Obtains information by using innovative methods and appropriately store it so that it can be retrieved easily for future use.	
5.4	**Leadership skills:** Influences others to achieve desired goals. Motivates and inspires others, builds coalitions and communicates vision. Influences overall organizational changes in policy, procedures, staffing and structure, as appropriate.	
5.5	**Organizational skills**: Integrates multiple dimensions of a public relations campaign. Combines internal and external components, so that messages are synchronized.	
Objective 6	Managing Relationships	15%
6.1	**Relationship building**: Employs consensus-building strategies and techniques to persuade key stakeholders to support a decision. Ensures discussions allow key stakeholders the opportunity to express opinions. Recognizes need for affected parties and stakeholders to find mutually acceptable solutions. Uses persuasion, negotiation and coalition building.	
6.2	**Reputation management**: Acts to maintain individual and organizational credibility with key constituents. Recognizes value of reputation, image, public trust and corporate social responsibility.	
6.3	**Internal stakeholders**: Recognizes importance of internal relationships to the public relations function. Appreciates organizational culture and the importance of communicating key messages through frontline supervisors. Uses mediated and non-mediated communication channels for effective engagement. Prioritizes internal publics.	
6.4	**Media relations**: Defines strengths, weaknesses and needs of different media. Explains relationships among public relations professionals, journalists and media organizations. Builds effective relationships with media based on mutual respect and trust. Analyzes current events and trends for opportunities and threats. Identifies appropriate controlled and uncontrolled media channels and key influencers.	
6.5	**Networks**: Determines how different tactics can be used to establish and enhance relationships (e.g., electronic communications, special events, face-to-face communication, networking, social networking, word-of-mouth and third-party communication). Recognizes interconnectedness among various stakeholders. Considers broad/global relationships.	