5 year Academic Program Review

Division: Communications  
Major: Public Relations

Submitted September 30, 2011

I. Program

1) Mission of the program:

The Department of Public Relations mission is to provide hands on personal training in the field of Public Relations preparing students for positions into the world of work.

2) Ways in which the program supports Valley’s mission:

This program supports Valley’s mission statement by maintaining a high level of academic challenge and standards for our students. Also, students actually work on campaigns to support other academic programs or organizations on campus. The emphasis in the Public Relations area is to encourage students to double major to make them more attractive to perspective employers. Generally a combination with Business or Mass Communication is encouraged although other combinations work as well. The PR program thus contributes to the mission statement by enabling students to add specific skills to help them market themselves for employment. The addition of the PR Minor last year adds to this versatility as we gradually attract students from other majors who can then become more marketable.

3) Goals of the Program:

To provide Missouri Valley College PR students with the professional and personal skills they need to enter and succeed in the world of Public Relations.

1. Make students aware of the vast field of Public Relations including its origin, history and future.
2. Provide intense practice in the creation and writing of the many forms of written and oral communication in Public Relations.
3. Provide students an opportunity to work on actual Public Relations Cases.
4. Ensure that graduates of the program are trained sufficiently that their skills can be marketed.
5. Maintain a minimum of students per class in the program.
6. Find employment for 100% of our graduates.
7. Achieve a 90% or higher completion rate of internships.
8. Create internship opportunities that can be utilized each year within commuting distance of MVC.
9. Work with all students so 100% achieve satisfactory scores on the exit exam.

4) Ways in which the program contributes to General Education:

None of the PR classes are in the General Education curriculum. Those students taking PR classes or related classes are assumed to be PR Majors or Minors.

5) Curriculum: Public Relations Major

PR 150. Principles of Public Relations – 3 hours. Course provides an overview of types of positions, employment opportunities, rules, and application of public relations. Provides a historical review of public relations and current uses of theoretical public relations application. Fall.

PR 250. Writing Effective Public Relations Proposals – 3 hours. Course provides an introduction to public relations techniques applicable to communication, especially the written requirements. Emphasis on writing and completing simulated public relations campaigns and introduction to various form of writing in PR from the memo to the proposal, from the backgrounder to the white paper, from the press release to the speech. Prerequisite: PR 150. Spring.

PR 350. Public Relations Case Problems – 3 hours. Communication theory and techniques pertaining to a variety of problem/solution issues related to government, business, and social campaigns and goals. Examines internal and external communication networks as well as mediated communication theory. Study of actual cases. Prerequisite: PR 250. Fall.

PR 401. Public Relations Internship – 3-6 hours. Internship under supervision of college personnel and cooperating facility. All internships must be approved and finalized in the semester prior to when they begin. Prerequisite: Permission. Fall. Spring.

PR 450. Public Relations Campaign/Case Studies – 3 hours. Advanced theory and practice in developing, writing, presenting, implementing, and analyzing a variety of campaigns involving strategic planning in business, electoral, political, and organizational campaigns. Study will involve additional theories such as: leadership styles, advertising, audience analysis, conflict management, and candidate and electoral context analysis. Emphasis on direct involvement in a PR campaign whenever possible. Study of actual cases. Prerequisite: PR 350. Spring.

PR 485. Senior Portfolio – 3 hours. Preparation of a student portfolio for senior assessment and employment interviews. Portfolio content will include a professional resume and cover letter, self-evaluative narrations of portfolio contents, and an internship report. Portfolio student would also coordinate PR projects being administered by the PR 350 and PR 450 classes and also work with the Missouri Valley College office of Public
Relations. An in-house assessment test based upon all coursework in business, speech, mass communications and public relations will be administered. Prerequisite: Graduating senior PR major.

6) Degree requirements:

**Major requirements:** PR 150, PR 250, PR 350, PR 450, PR 401, SP 405, SP 415, PR 485, MC 370, MC 400, EN 327, BA 212, BA 232, BA 302, BA 332, BA 362, BA 422 or PY 380.
(Total 53 hours)

**Minor requirements:** PR 150, PR 250, PR 350, SP 405, MC 370, BA 232 and PR 450. (Total 21 hours)

**Major assessment:** Public Relations majors will assemble a portfolio with samples of their work done as interns and on projects assigned in the upper level PR classes.

7) Brief description of the status of the discipline, including emerging issues and trends:

*Public Relations Specialists*

According to the Occupational Outlooks Handbook, employment is projected to grow much faster than average in the PR field although keen competition is expected for entry-level jobs.

Opportunities should be best for college graduates who combine a degree in public relations, journalism, or another communications-related field with a public relations internship or other related work experience.

Strong communication skills are essential.

At MVC we follow the emerging trends.

Employment of public relations specialists is expected to grow 24 percent from 2008 to 2018, much faster than the average for all occupations. The need for good public relations in an increasingly competitive and global business environment should spur demand for these workers, especially those with specialized knowledge or international experience. Employees who possess additional language capabilities also are in great demand.

The recent emergence of social media in the public relations is expected to increase job growth as well. *(NOTE: THIS IS ONE OF THE REASONS WE WILL BE OFFERING AN EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN SOCIAL MEDIA THIS SPRING (2012) WITH THE INTENTION OF MAKING IT PART OF OUR REGULAR COURSE OFFERINGS AND EVENTUALLY A PR REQUIREMENT.)*
Many public relations firms are expanding their use of these tools, and specialists with skills in them will be needed.

Employment in public relations firms is expected to grow as firms hire contractors to provide public relations services, rather than support more full-time staff when additional work is needed.

Among detailed industries, the largest job growth will continue to be in advertising and related services.

Job prospects. Keen competition likely will continue for entry-level public relations jobs, as the number of qualified applicants is expected to exceed the number of job openings. Many people are attracted to this profession because of the high-profile nature of the work. Opportunities should be best for college graduates who combine a degree in journalism, public relations, or another communications-related field with a public relations internship or other related work experience. Applicants who do not have the appropriate educational background or work experience will face the toughest obstacles.

Additional job opportunities should result from the need to replace public relations specialists who retire or leave the occupation for other reasons.

The program at MVC has grown slightly since its inception but more important is the quality of the students produced. In the last two years a PR major has been recognized as one of the outstanding scholars at MVC. Two students have gone on to pursue Law degrees, and our students have had no difficulty obtaining employment.

II. Student/Faculty Information

No full time faculty are employed to teach Public Relations Classes. A full time faculty member teaches all five of the specific PR Classes and basically administers the course under the direction of the Chair of the Communications Division. The faculty member also teaches Mass Communication and English. Full time faculty in the Business, Mass Communication, English, and Speech areas teach the other courses required of a PR graduate.

1) Profile of current full-time faculty and teaching loads

Harry Carrell completed a B.A. Degree in English/Liberal Arts from Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado in 1969. Carrell completed his M.A. degree in English with a concentration in American Studies and Creative Writing from Bemidji State University in 1972. Carrell has completed graduate courses at Central Missouri State University, Truman State University, and the University of Missouri School of Journalism.
Carrell’s teacher certification for high school teaching was obtained at Missouri State University in 1974. Carrell was a recipient of the Dow Jones Fellowship in Journalism Scholarship from the University of Missouri and is a graduate of the Missouri Writing Project.

A veteran classroom teacher Carrell worked at Marshall High School for 27 years where he directed the student newspaper and student yearbook to numerous awards. He served three terms as President of the Marshall Teachers Association, was an officer in the Journalism Education Association and awarded the Outstanding Teacher Award.

In addition to Journalism Carrell taught English, Dual credit composition, and Developmental Writing classes.

Carrell is currently serving his third term as President of the Missouri Broadcast Education Association.

Actively involved in Missouri Valley College, Carrell is chairman of the Curriculum Committee, a member of the General Studies Committee, and a member of the Online Education committee.

Before starting his teaching career Carrell worked for two newspapers and a magazine as both a writer and editor. He spearheaded two public relations campaigns for the Marshall School District, worked as a Communication Specialist for 3rd Battalion, 75th Field Artillery for three years in Springfield, Missouri, handling all of their Public Relations, and did the same job for Company C of the 128th Field Artillery unit in Marshall, Missouri, before being transferred to Battalion Headquarters in Columbia.

Carrell’s PR work in Columbia earned him the Army Commendation Medal.

Mass Communication Instructors:

David L. Roberts, assistant professor of Mass Communication, has a bachelor’s degree in Journalism from the University of Arizona, 1979; and a master’s degree in Journalism from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 1997. He serves on the MVC Faculty Senate and the college’s Higher Learning Commission self-study committee. He serves as faculty adviser for the Delta student newspaper, the Delta Online news website, the Zoom photojournalism magazine, and the yearbook project. His professional background is in the newspaper business, founding a weekly newspaper in Wyoming and publishing it for 11 years. The Delta has won numerous Missouri College Media Awards.

English Instructors:

Dr. Gruber’s significant activities in the last 5 years include two scholarly publications: A forthcoming reprint of “‘So.’ So What? It’s a Culture War. That’s Hwaet.” In Geardagum XXIII


Dr. Gruber served the Iowa Poetry Association (IPA) as Semi-Annual IPA Workshop critic (2008, 2010), and he served as the IPA’s *Lyrical Iowa* contest judge (2006, 2007). He moderated two fiction sessions and presented at another at the Sigma Tau Delta International Convention (2006); he also moderated one session and presented in another at the Mid-America Medieval Association (MAMA) Conference (2008).

To enhance college-community-public school relationships, Dr. Gruber presented a resume writing workshop at a Missouri Valley College graduate’s journalism class in El Dorado, MO (2007); and he is a regular contributor to “In the Outdoors with Brad and Brian,” on Marshall’s radio station, KMMO-FM and kmmo.com, serving as co-host when needed.

Dr. Gruber completed a post-doctoral course, “Writing and Selling Children’s Books: An Advanced Writing Program for Selected Students,” Institute of Children’s Literature (1999), and is taking “Beyond the Basics: Creating and Selling Short Stories and Articles” (2009 to present).

Dr. Gruber has completed his Young Adult historical adventure novel (2010), which is undergoing major revisions; he has completed the first of the historical adventure novel’s sequel (2010 to present).

Professor of English
Professor of Mass Communication

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*Business Instructors: Vita for those in the Business area is available on the five year plan from the Business Department.*

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**FULL-TIME**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Division</th>
<th># credit hours</th>
<th># of advisees</th>
<th>Years of teaching</th>
<th>Highest degree</th>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>
### 2) Profile of current adjunct faculty and teaching loads

**ADJUNCT: NONE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Division</th>
<th># credit hours taught in program in past year</th>
<th># of advisees</th>
<th>Years of teaching and/or professional experience</th>
<th>Highest degree</th>
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<tr>
<td>Harry Carrell</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20 20</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>M.A. +</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Roberts</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan Dittmer</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorne Gruber</td>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10 10</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>PH.d</td>
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</table>

Total credit hours: [table]

% of credit hours taught by adjuncts: [table]

### 3) Course offerings this past year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 100-200 level</th>
<th>Fall 300-400 level</th>
<th>Spring 100-200 level</th>
<th>Spring 300-400 level</th>
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<tr>
<td>Face-to-face sections</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio sections*</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internships/practicums</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab (face-to-face) sections</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online sections</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranged classes</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Classes total</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</table>

General education classes offered:** 0 0 0 0

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Note: Most of our internships are completed during the summer. Upper level PR classes, PR350, PR450 and most importantly PR485 are taught working on actual PR Cases as much as possible. The introductory class would probably be classified as a lecture, the second class is a writing intensive training class in the production of PR type documents such as backgrounders, profiles, situation analysis, and most importantly planning and implementing simulated PR campaigns, then the classes generally move into the actual real world of Public Relations with the PR485 class as a capstone where students compile a portfolio, work on their resume, make specific plans for what to do after graduations, and work on actual PR Campaigns.

4) Faculty professional development activities

Carrell keeps abreast of trends in PR by monitoring major PR cases in the real world and keeping up to date with PR journals such as PR Tactics and PR Review.

5) Student information this past year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majors</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduating seniors</td>
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</table>

6) Number of graduates over last five years—14

7) Any available relevant information such as job placement of graduates, student performance on licensure/certification exams, alumni and employer surveys, etc.

This has already been addressed. All of our graduates are either working full time or attending graduate school.

**Table 2. Faculty Teaching and Advising Loads**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 100-200 level</th>
<th>Fall 300-400 level</th>
<th>Spring 100-200 level</th>
<th>Spring 300-400 level</th>
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<tbody>
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<td># students enrolled in lectures*</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td># lecture sections offered</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># lab sections offered</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># classes total</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of general education classes offered</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># contact hours taught by FT faculty**</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># contact hours taught by PT faculty</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>% contact hours taught by PT faculty</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># credit hours taught by FT faculty</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># credit hours taught by PT faculty</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% credit hours taught by PT faculty</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># advisees of FT faculty</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td># advisees of PT faculty</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sum of all students in all lecture sections taught by program faculty. A student may be counted multiple times.

**A contact hour is defined as a full-semester scheduled class or lab hour where the faculty member is continuously engaged with the students. Partial semester hours are prorated. Academic credits do not necessarily coincide with contact hours. Supervisory and online course situations are considered on a case-by-case basis.

1) Faculty professional development activities:

   See above

2) Current enrollment: 18

3) Number of graduates over last five years: 14

Public Relations Graduates

2006 (1)  Holly Allison  
2007 (2)  Colt Brecht  
           Elizabeth Hines  
2008 (2)  Sasha Sankey  
           Danielle Carr  
2009 (3)  April Stottlemyre*  
           Rachel Henke*  
           Justin Cary  
2010 (2)  Quenten Harrison  
           Maile Pihana  
2011 (4)  Chris Coulter  
           Ashley Martin  
           Micah Petersen*  
           Samantha Richardson

* Students cited for outstanding scholarship
4) Any available relevant information such as job placement of graduates, student performance on licensure/certification exams, alumni and employer surveys, etc.

*Highly successful job placement thus far as noted above.*

III. Program Assessment and Planning

**Student learning outcomes**

1. **Students will be able to communicate effectively with their audiences.**
   - Outcome 1: Students will be able to prepare public relations communication messages in the appropriate style.
   - Outcome 2: Students will be able to apply appropriate technology to the creation and dissemination of messages.
   - Outcome 3: Students will be able to plan communication that serves audience needs.
   - Outcome 4: Students will be able to use appropriate research methods to answer relevant questions.
   - Outcome 5: Students will be able to plan, initiate, and complete a specific Public Relations Campaign.

2. **Students will act professionally in their practice.**
   - Outcome 1: Students will be able to practice communication and plan orientation within legal boundaries.
   - Outcome 2: Students will exhibit standards of professional behavior as to dress, actions and presentations.
   - Outcome 3: Students will be able to demonstrate sensitivity to the ethical issues of their practice.
   - Outcome 4: Students will be literate in the language of the media and Public Relations.

3. **Students will be scholars of the Public Relations process**
   - Outcome 1: Students will be able to apply relevant theory to Public Relations practice.
   - Outcome 2: Students will understand the factors that shape(d) their profession.
   - Outcome 3: Students will value freedom of speech in the marketplace of ideas.
   - Outcome 4: Students will be able to think critically about the relationship between Public Relations and society.
Outcome 5: Students will be aware of the ethics of the profession and the Code of ethics of both the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC)

4. Students will be able to apply ethical-centered values as they contribute to society

Outcome 1: Students will respect diversity and agency in a global society
Outcome 2: Students will be able to exercise moral reasoning when faced with ethical dilemmas
Outcome 3: Students will show a commitment to making a positive difference within their sphere of influence

See Attached Course Map

Public Relations classes: PR150, PR250, PR350, PR450, PR485 taken in sequence with each PR class building upon skills learned in previous classes.
Oral Communication: Speech 405, Oral Communication: Options for SP309, SP322, or PY380.
Mass Communication classes: MC310, MC400
English classes: EN327
Business classes: BA212, BA232, BA332, BA362.
Art (Graphic Design) AR112

2) Means of assessing student learning outcomes:

- **Internships**: The progress of our students in the small PR program is ongoing and extensive. One of the primary assessment tools is the internship evaluation by both the campus supervisor and the on-site administrator. All students are required to complete at least one internship before graduation. During the internship, students are required to submit a weekly narrative relating to their progress based upon the goals expressed in the internship learning plan. At the end of the internship, an internship evaluation must be submitted.

- **Portfolio**: An Electronic portfolio that illustrates growth over time in generic as well as discipline-based skills and one not distorted by a student having a bad day and performing poorly on a 3-hour snapshot of what has been learned in college on an exam is one of the major assessments. Within this portfolio, students are required to have:
  a. An up to date resume
  b. An up to date letter of introduction
  c. Letters of recommendation
  d. A full internship evaluation
  e. A minimum of three or more Case Studies of actual PR campaigns upon which the student worked, along with a detailed analysis of the outcomes of that campaign.
• Tests: Nearly all tests in PR classes are essay, to reinforce the need to master strong writer communication skills.

• Writing for External Publication: In the MC370 and EN327 classes students are required to write and submit for publication various assignments relating to the PR field.

• Written Campaigns: In PR250 students are introduced to the concept of creating a mock PR campaign using the ten step process of:
  a. Define the problem
  b. A situation analysis
  c. Establish specific goals
  d. Determine Primary Focus
  e. List specific objectives
  f. Define and Develop Strategies
  g. Create Activities
  h. Evaluation of success/failure of all of the above
  i. Execution of a Timeline
  j. Working within an established budget

Note: These skills are then transferred to PR350, PR450, and PR485 where the students work on actual PR campaigns for the college or entities within the community.

• Oral presentations: The ability to communicate orally as well as written is stressed through out with numerous opportunities both in and out of class for oral presentations in front of large and small groups.

• Exit Exam: A final exit exam in administered in PR485 but it serves more as a review than an exam for a grade.

3) Evaluate effectiveness of assessment methods used:

No discernable problems thus far on academic assessment. Assessment is constantly being reviewed. Two students were required to repeat internships.

4) Summarize improvements made based on the results of the assessment:

For the last two years revision in the established curriculum has been made based upon the growing changes of the program. In 2011 a committee consisting of the PR Instructor, the Chairman of the Communications Division, the full time PR Employee of the college, a student graduating that May and a student scheduled to graduate in the next May met and made revisions in the curriculum. The two students surveyed all PR students in the program for input as to what was working and what was not. They also contacted students who had completed internships and students who were actually working in the field.
5) If applicable, brief analysis of grade patterns of courses with high failure rates and/or withdrawals and action plan for student improvement in these courses:

Most students do extremely well academically in this program. As cited above, some of the most recent graduates rank among MVC’s highest academic achievers. The youth of the program and the low enrollment allows for good tracking. Only one student has failed to make it through the program because of academics. Two high caliber students were lost because they transferred to another school. One because her husband graduated and is now attending Law school and one because he transferred to a school closer to home to play football. Two students were failed during internships because they did not meet the minimum requirements.

IV. Facilities and Resources

Facilities thus far have been excellent. All Public Relations classes meet in the Mass Communication lab so students have access to the internet, computers, and all of the software available for graphic design and publication. The addition of the Graphic Arts class to the curriculum in 2012 will provide students access to the Video Editing Lab where they can be exposed to both the PC and Mac platforms and the up to date graphic arts software recently installed in the lab. The online electronic data bases of the library provide access for research, although, because of the youth of the program, we do not have a lot of specific journals or magazines devoted to PR on hand. This weakness will be addressed over time. The inability to schedule live video conferences has hampered some of the outside work and consultation with PR professionals. By definition Public Relations is generally practiced in large, urban areas. This makes internships difficult and interaction with professionals in the field also difficult.

V. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)

1) Strengths: According to the students the strength of the program is the small classes and the fact they get to work on actual Public Relations Campaigns during the last two years of the program.
2) Weaknesses:
3) Opportunities: Numerous opportunities for Public Relations majors exist because the degree is general enough students can seek employment in various disciplines from Human Resources to Political Employees.
4) Threats: None, unless the low numbers create concern with the administration.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERNAL Origin</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>NEGATIVE/ HARMFUL to achieving the goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| facts/ factors of the major | o Small classes.  
| | o Students actually work on PR campaigns.  
| | o Classes cross division lines from Business to art. |
| | Weaknesses | |
| | • Still adjusting the curriculum, especially the outside courses.  
| | • Recruitment  
| | • Need Skype for conferences |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTERNAL Origin</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| facts/ factors of the environment in which the major operates | 1. Excellent, especially in the area of job placement and advancement to higher degrees.  
| | 2. A cross curriculum major. | 1. New program with small enrollment.  
| | | 2. Recruitment must come from within.  
| | | 3. No students come directly to MVC to study PR. All students transfer in from another major. |

Comments from external reviewer(s) (Not completed yet but Dr. Cynthia Crawford has agreed to serve as outside reviewer for the program. Another possible reviewer is a PR professional who has made presentations to the students.

VI. Conclusion and Vision

1) Status of program: growing, static, or declining:
Growing. But slowly because it is selective.

2) Major strengths/accomplishments of the program over the last five years:

Job placement thus far has been excellent and those students going on for advanced degrees have reported no difficulty.

3) 5 Year Program improvement

Remain a strong, selective program with the emphasis on the quality of the students produced rather than the numbers. A goal is to have a minimum of five students in the basic course each year and to carry those students all the way to graduation.

4) Strategies and resources required for achieving the program vision:

Continued support from administration and Developmental office. Development of Skype facilities for conferences. Continue one on one instruction, develop local contacts for internships. Addition of Social Networking class to requirements.