



**DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM
AND PUBLIC RELATIONS**

SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

Indiana University
Indianapolis

To: Vice Chancellor Janice Blum

From: Jonas Bjork

Date: January 29, 2016

Re: Request for change in total credit hours for the M.A. in Public Relations and a re-alignment of core courses and electives.

The Department of Journalism and Public Relations, previously the School of Journalism, has been offering a Master of Arts degree in Public Relations since the fall of 2007. The program, which does not require a thesis, consists of 33 credit hours. The program was designed to appeal to mid-career professionals whose opportunities would be advanced by acquiring an advanced degree, although it has, since its inception, also attracted a number of students directly from undergraduate programs.

The change we are seeking is to reduce the number of required credit hours in the program from 33 to 30 by abolishing the requirement that students take courses through Kelley Direct. That would entail dropping a Kelley Direct required course as well as one Kelley Direct elective. In addition, we want the General Electives of the program to be raised from four courses to five.

The justifications for the change are:

1. When the program was established in 2007, the School of Journalism negotiated favorable rates with Kelley Direct for two required courses (A501 Accounting & Financial Reporting—abolished earlier this year—and C570 Strategic Marketing Management) as well as one elective course from a list of four (C521 Managing Accounting Information for Decision Making, C532 Business and Economics Forecasting, C561 U.S. in a Global Economy, and C550 Business Law and Ethics). Recent correspondence with Kelley Direct has indicated, however, that these favorable rates are no longer operative; on the contrary, Journalism & PR students in C570 were assessed a per-course fee last semester amounting to \$1,200 on top of regular tuition, making Kelley Direct courses prohibitively expensive for our students.
2. Several of the four elective Kelley Direct courses are offered infrequently, making it difficult for our students to fit them into their programs.

3. Feedback from graduates in the PR master's program has indicated that the Kelley Direct courses are not regarded as a good fit with the rest of the program's courses.

4. Reducing the number of credit hours in the PR master's program to 30 would bring it in line with the 30 hours required in our other master's program, Sports Journalism, and thus make the two degrees more uniform.

5. Abolishing the Kelley Direct elective in favor of one more elective in Journalism and Public Relations or Communication Studies would allow students to take more specialized courses that better serve their career goals.

I welcome any questions and can be reached at 278-5325 and bjork@iupui.edu.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jonas Bjork". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end of the name.

Jonas Bjork, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair