



Hanze
University of Applied Sciences
Groningen



Public Affairs

Exchange semester

share your talent. **move** the world.

The specialisation in Public Affairs focuses on the development of professional competences needed for the job of a Junior Consultant in Public Affairs or Corporate Communication, such as the ability to analyse and research communication environment; the ability to give an advice on a communication policy and interest representation; the ability to develop a plan on corporate communication, concern communication, publicity, or grassroots support; the ability to suggest the evaluation plan. Students not only explore the function of public affairs and corporate communication in the international environment, including the role of new media and recent developments of digital public affairs, but also learn about strategic interest representation in Brussels.

The core of a programme is a project, in which students, based on initial research on issue or opportunity and a communication environment, give a strategic advice on public affairs for a real Client. Once approved by the Client, the strategy is further developed and is accompanied with an implementation plan and a suggestion on evaluation. Since research forms an important element in the educational programme, students can prepare themselves well for the graduation period. Last but not least, students practice their intercultural competencies by working together in truly multicultural project teams on real international issues.

The educational programme includes a possible study trip abroad to one of ‘world’ capitals with visits to international organisations, NGO’s, think tanks, and lobby agencies. The expected costs are about € 300.

Please note that this programme is only open to students who are in the final year of their bachelor studies.

Course	Capstone Assignment: Research Proposal + Public Affairs Strategy
Credits	5
Content	<p>The capstone assignment includes development of a strategic communication advice to the business or non-profit organisation on a current issue in a real-life setting. You acquire the opportunity to work for high profile businesses (like Gasunie, Energy Delta Institute, or Healthy Ageing Campus) or public affairs consultancies with a global reach.</p> <p>In the course of the project you develop and practice professional competences needed for the job of a junior public affairs consultant, such as ability to do communication research, ability to give a strategic policy advice, ability to formulate policy, and representation of organisation. In addition, the intercultural competences are practiced while working in truly multinational project teams on issues of international importance.</p> <p>The project consists of four phases: (1) formative research, (2) strategy development, (3) planning and programming, (4) and evaluation of a strategy. You start with setting a project plan and agreeing on cooperation in their team. After briefing the client your project team drafts a Research Proposal (like in a graduation assignment), which defines conceptual / theoretical framework and the research strategy. The client has to approve a Research Proposal and agree with suggested research activities. After the stage of a formative research you develop public affairs strategies, which are presented for the approval to the client. Deliverables are 1st project portfolio (e.g. project plan, research proposal, strategy(ies)) and presentation to the client.</p>

Course	Corporate Communication
Credits	2
Content	Communication professionals are challenged as never before to develop coherent, communications in order to advance the interests of their organizations. This course aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of corporate communications and to introduce a variety of ways in which corporate communications can be managed and organized in companies. You will study real practice examples on such key issues as corporate social responsibility, reputation management, corporate branding, corporate identity, and integrated communication. The attention will be paid for stakeholders mapping and public issues management. The module is composed of lectures, class discussions, and case studies.

Course	Policy Research
Credits	2
Content	The aim of this course is to develop an in-depth understanding of multi-dimensional aspects and perspectives of a public policy issue. The focus is on methodological issues involved in the design and conduct of research studies in public policy. You will be provided with opportunities to develop their conceptual knowledge in areas as defining the problem, gathering evidence, constructing the alternatives, selecting criteria, projecting the outcomes and telling the story.

Course	Public Affairs Theory
Credits	2
Content	Public affairs professionals are given responsibilities for many activities, such as government relations, direct and grassroots lobbying, issues management, and media relations. All these activities focus on the generation and application of political power. The task of the professional is to convert organizations socio-economic or human resources into various forms of political power. However, public affairs strategies and their supporting tactics cannot effectively be applied unless professionals understand their underlying theory and dynamics. The course aims to develop the knowledge and comprehension of public affairs theory as well as its application. Such knowledge should prevent the blind application of campaigns that worked elsewhere but might not be appropriate for a current situation.

Course	Writing and Speaking for Public Affairs
Credits	2
Content	The course aims to develop practical communication skills needed for work in public affairs. You will learn different formats and styles necessary for public affairs writers, which they will encounter as public affairs practitioners. In addition to writing, public speaking skills will be practiced and assessed.

Course	Capstone Assignment: Advice on Public Affairs Implementation and Evaluation
Credits	6
Content	<p>In the second part of the semester you will continue with the project. The main tasks during this stage of the project is to develop a communication plan for the (part of) approved public affairs strategy and to suggest an evaluation plan for the strategy and implementation.</p> <p>This stage might include a study / research trip to Brussels or another European capital (depending on a project needs) to collect data and to interview various stakeholders, which allows developing of a realistic strategy implementation plan. If a study trip will take place, then project groups will be asked to compliment the common study trip programme with an individual project group programme which resembles the specific needs of the project.</p> <p>Main deliverables are portfolio with reports and presentation to the Client.</p>

Course	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Ethics
Credits	2
Content	Public affairs professionals need to deal with a multitude of ethical questions. In answering these dilemmas, they have to take into account organizational consequences. This is particularly true when operating in a public policy context, in which media and various public bodies and non-profit organizations are also important stakeholders. In this course we will reflect on professional ethical codes and real life dilemmas faced by practitioners in the field of public affairs.

Course	Lobbying Brussels
Credits	2
Content	You will identify how lobbying is influencing the decision making and learn the theory behind lobbying in a European context.

Course	Politics and Actors in the EU
Credits	2
Content	What is being decided in the European Union directly affects businesses and countries. Nowadays understanding the European machinery, as well as knowing who and when to influence, is of crucial importance, especially for a public affairs professional. You will get familiar with the political scene in Europe by exploring main actors and their roles as well as the way politics plays out. By studying current examples you learn about how a public (NGO, IO) or private (business) interest is represented and safeguarded in the European decision making. Simulations of the Council of the European Union or participation in the international simulations of the European Union (every second year) is part of the learning activities. In the simulations you assume the role of politicians and debate on a specific current policy issue. While preparing for the simulations you develop and apply lobbying strategies and form coalitions on an issue as in a real life. The main deliverable is a portfolio, which, among others, includes description of a role and an official position on a policy issue to be addressed during simulations.

Course	Evaluating Public Relations
Credits	2
Content	The course introduces the evaluation of public relations activities. The emphasis is on methodological issues involved in the practice of evaluating public relations activities.

Course	Professional Skills: Consulting
Credits	1
Content	This course helps you to understand the consultancy process. You are consulting any time you are trying to change or improve a situation but have no direct control over the implementation. The consultant's lack of direct control and authority is what makes the task difficult. Consulting is used in a general sense: not only for external consultants but also for people in staff functions who act as internal consultants.

Course	Innovation Lab: Creative Society
Credits	2
Content	In this Innovation Lab you will have the opportunity to explore the theory of Creative Society. During the first week you will gain theoretical knowledge and in the following weeks you will work on mini-projects.

Contact details

For questions about the content of this programme, please contact Ms. Beata Kviatek:
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