



UW

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

NRC Public Relations Strategy Session: Are You Ready?

**Council of Graduate Schools
47th Annual Meeting**

**Seattle, Washington
December 6, 2007**





PR Advice for Responding to the NRC Assessment of Research Doctoral Programs

- **Prepare now to explain, interpret, simplify and demystify**
- **Provide context – on your terms**
- **Understand the NRC embargo system and how it affects you**
- **Identify/list/prioritize key internal and external audiences**
- **Identify/list questions most likely to be asked (FAQs)**





PR Advice, continued

- Identify/prepare one (ideally) university-wide spokesperson
- As possible – anticipate extremes, strengths, vulnerabilities in results – this is where the media may likely focus
- Develop key messages/talking points – three maximum
- Practice “controlled redundancy” for highest priority key messages





How to Act on That Advice

- Remember - you are not alone!
- Schedule prep time now – even if you don't feel ready quite yet
- Prepare—in writing—talking points customized to your institution, integrated with/complementary to CGS messages
- Keep your response positive
- Consider the pros and cons of being pro-active with the news media





Examples of Key Questions to Ask As You Prepare

- **Has your university set the precedent of meeting with editorial boards or other media for background briefings? (before news breaks)**
- **What will be the expectations of various audiences?**
- **What do you want those audiences to remember about your results/rankings?**
- **Who will take the lead/ownership of overall PR planning and strategy?**





For More Information And Assistance

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