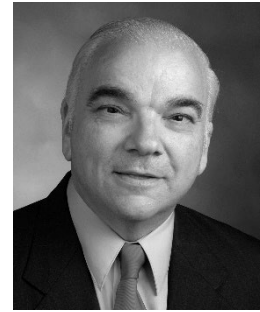


Kirk Hallahan Profile

Kirk Hallahan is professor emeritus in the Department of Journalism and Media Communication at Colorado State University, Fort Collins. He was employed for 19 years in public relations, public affairs and marketing before embarking on a 24-year second career in university teaching and research in 1991. He retired from full-time teaching and research in May 2017.



Professional Career. A 1971 graduate of UCLA, Hallahan completed his master's degree at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he began his public relations career by promoting attendance at summer school and by coordinating a speaker's bureau for a NASA-sponsored project on satellite meteorology.

In 1973, he joined the Los Angeles office of a major public relations agency, Harshe-Rotman & Druck, Inc., which later merged into Ruder & Finn. While in counseling, he worked on a wide range of consumer and business-to-business programs. Among his clients were the Pasadena Tournament of Roses and Rose Bowl football game. He also oversaw the general photography room at the Academy Awards for six years.

Hallahan entered the financial services industry in 1979, just prior to the deregulation of banking, and participated in the introduction of major new services by California Federal Bank, then the nation's largest fourth largest savings and loan (now merged into Citibank). He was involved in four major mergers and coordinated public relations [with outside counsel] of Cal Fed's initial public stock offering, which raised \$387 million and was then the second largest IPO in U.S. history. He also oversaw a 250,000-circulation quarterly customer magazine and was responsible for the corporate annual report.

From 1984 to 1989, he was in charge of public relations and communications for the California League of Savings Institutions. He served as the statewide trade group's chief marketing and public affairs officer; oversaw a 5,000-circulation monthly publication; developed a new corporate identity system; supported programming and promotion for three major annual conferences; and managed statewide political action programs.

For two years, from 1989 to 1991, he was the chief public affairs officer at Coast Federal Bank, Los Angeles, a \$9 billion institution (now merged into JP Morgan Chase). He was responsible for speech writing and executive projects, employee communications, media relations, government and industry relations, a speaker's bureau, community and urban outreach, and all charitable contributions.

Hallahan is a past president of the Publicity Club of Los Angeles (1978-1979) and has been an accredited member of the Public Relations Society of America since 1978. He served as treasurer of the PRSA Los Angeles chapter for seven years, as South Pacific District Chair in 1984, and as Financial Services Section chair in 1986-87. As a leader in PRSA-LA, he was the initial organizer of a Don Perkins Community Service Grants program (created through a bequest to the chapter) and spearheaded creation of the Kenneth Oowler Smith Distinguished Lecture at the University of Southern California. He was chosen PRSA-LA's Professional of the Year in 1988,

and captured a coveted PRSA Silver Anvil for a promotional program conducted on behalf of Shindana Toys in 1975.

Academic Career. In 1991, Hallahan returned to the University of Wisconsin-Madison and entered the Ph.D. degree program in mass communications, which he completed in 1995. While pursuing doctoral studies, he taught the intermediate public relations case studies course as well as the large-lecture introductory public relations course at Wisconsin. He also was faculty adviser to the Public Relations Student Society of America (a position he also held at Colorado State from 1996 to 2004, and from 2005 to 2014). His Ph.D. minor is in business (marketing).

From 1993 to 1996, he served on the faculty at the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks. At UND, he taught several public relations courses, a graduate research seminar, an integrated marketing communications course for non-majors, and a large-lecture introductory mass media course.

Hallahan joined the Colorado State faculty in 1996 and was promoted to associate professor with tenure in 2000 and full professor in 2007. At Colorado State, he has taught undergraduate courses in public relations, advertising, media and society, business communication, and business/professional and technical communication. He also developed a new undergraduate course in digital promotion management, one of the first of courses to address the use of Internet- and mobile-based media in public relations and advertising. In Spring 2015, he piloted a new course specifically on social media management. His graduate teaching assignments included public relations management/strategic communication (focused on topics such as digital public relations, issues and crisis management; and crises, emergencies and disasters), public communication campaigns, managing communications systems, communication theory, and research methods.

For five years, from 1998 to 2005, he was faculty coordinator for Colorado State's professional master's degree program in Communications Management offered in Denver. The program awarded 128 degrees. On campus he has advised four Ph.D. students and supervised theses by 28 master's students—including surveys, content analyses and experiments related to communications in the United States, Canada, Japan, Taiwan and Ukraine.

Hallahan's research crosses organizational strategic communications. His dissertation research focused on the role of content class schemas as heuristics in the processing of product information presented as news versus advertising. His strong interest in promotional message strategy continues. In recent years, he has devoted a major portion of his attention to the use of communications technologies in public relations, marketing and organizational communication. Separately, he developed and taught for 13 years (2002-2014) a comprehensive introductory public relations course online. In retirement, he continues to teach an online course in History of Media.

Hallahan's research has appeared in *Public Relations Review*, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, and the *International Journal of Strategic Communication* (of which he was a co-founding editor). He has also contributed to the *Handbook of Public Relations* (2001 and 2010 editions), the *Encyclopedia of Public Relations* (2005 and 2014 editions), and the new *Routledge*

Handbook of Strategic Communication. Most recently he was associate editor of the *International Encyclopedia of Strategic Communication*, for which he co-authored the volume's theme entry and wrote the entries on public relations and publicity, among others. He has published book chapters or articles in *Communication Yearbook*, *The Internet Encyclopedia*, *Handbook of Technology Management*, *Handbook of Crisis and Risk Communication*, *Asian Journal of Communication*, *Journal of Communication Management*, *Journal of Promotion Management*, *Public Relations Quarterly*, *Public Relations Tactics* and the *Dartnell Public Relations Handbook*. He has presented his work at two dozen scholarly conference sessions, where he captured 10 top-paper honors in refereed competitions.

He was an affiliate faculty member of the Colorado School of Public Health and the Center for Disaster and Risk Analysis prior to his retirement.

Professional Honors, Achievements and Involvements. Hallahan is recipient of four major awards for public relations educators: the PRSA Foundation's Jackson, Jackson & Wagner Behavioral Science Prize (2001), the Institute for Public Relations' Pathfinder Award (2007), the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication PR Division's suPRstar award (2009), and the national PRSA Outstanding Educator of the Year Award (2010). In 1995 Hallahan was elected a member of the PRSA College of Fellows. In 2005, he was honored with the Swede Johnson Lifetime Achievement Award presented by PRSA Colorado Professional Chapter.

His academic involvements included the AEJMC PR Division, where he has served as research chair, professional freedom and responsibility chair, and webmaster. He previously was a leader in the PRSA Educators Academy, and a member of the International Communication Association and of the Society of Professional Journalists. In 2005, he was one of the founders of the *International Journal of Strategic Communication* and served as co-editor (with Derina Holtzhausen) from 2005-2007. For 10 years he operated PR-education.org, a web portal to public relations education. A 1999 article in the *Journal of Public Relations Research* remains among the top 3 read and/or cited articles in the journal's history.

Hallahan was listed in the 58th edition of *Who's Who in America* (2004) and has been listed previously in *Who's Who in the West*. While a practitioner, he was listed in both *Who's Who in Public Relations* (6th edition) and annual editions of *O'Dwyer's Directory of Public Relations Executives*. He serves on the editorial boards of *Public Relations Review*, *Journal of Public Relations Research* and the *International Journal of Strategic Communication*.

University Service. In 2015, he was a recipient of an Oliver P. Pennock Distinguished Service Award for his contributions to Colorado State. Most notably, he served six years as the University Grievance Officer (2009-2015), an independent university official responsible who facilitates the resolution of disputes involving faculty or administrative professionals and their supervisors. His previous faculty leadership positions included vice chair (2005, 2006-2007) and parliamentarian (2007-2008) of Faculty Council, the university's academic senate. He had suspended his Faculty Council leadership role in 2005 to assume a part-time duties as special assistant to the president and was responsible for completing the university's strategic plan. He

authored *Setting the Standard. Strategic Directions* (2006), a 32-page distillation of the plan structure, which was followed by the university for several years.

Hallahan chaired the Committee on Strategic and Financial Planning for two years, also serving as the *ex-officio* faculty representative to the Executive Budget Committee (2003-2004) and a faculty representative on the University Planning Council (2004-2005). He had previously served as the College of Liberal Arts' representative on CoSFP (2002-2003, and served again in 2008-2011). He had begun his university-level service as the departmental representative to Faculty Council in 1999 and later also served as the college representative on the Faculty Council Executive Committee (2000-2002).

During his university service, he continued to be heavily engaged in service to the department and chaired at various times the graduate, curriculum, tenure and promotion, and merit review committees as well as two faculty searches. For six years he served as a faculty representative on the Board of Student Communications that oversaw Student Media (1999-2005) and for 15 years was faculty club adviser to the Public Relations Student Society of America (1996-2004; 2005-2012; 2013-2014, 2016-2017).

Corrected March 2026