

Public Safety Communications: Certificate

Faculty of Trades and Technology	kpu.ca/trades
Public Safety Communications	kpu.ca/pscm
Implementation Date	01-Sep-2011
Start Date(s)	September
Intake Type	Limited intake
Instructional Cycle	Semester-based
Program Type	Undergraduate
Credential Granted	Certificate
Offered At	Cloverdale
Format	Full-time
How to Apply	www.kpu.ca/admission

DESCRIPTION

In 1990, KPU introduced the first Public Safety Communications Program in Canada.

This unique, 8-month program prepares students for a growing industry that requires professionally selected and trained public safety communicators. A public safety communicator's expertise means the difference between life and death for a caller. Rapid technological changes, as well as greater social and cultural diversity, have heightened the need for communicators who can successfully function under considerable pressure. The role of the public safety communicator is that of a "first" First Responder as they are the first point of contact for the public to emergency services. While the duties performed by communicators vary considerably according to the function and structure of the organization, there is a simple common element: the communicator critically links the public to those who provide police, fire, and emergency medical assistance. Students will apply the knowledge they learned throughout the program by performing as Emergency Call Takers and Dispatchers in the Simulated Communications Centre on the Cloverdale campus. Additional information is available from our program website at: kpu.ca/trades/public_safety.

STUDENT PROFILE

A desire to help people is an important qualification for public safety communicators but it does not ensure success in this demanding career. The public safety communicator must have superior computer skills, multi-tasking abilities, be able to simultaneously manipulate telephones and radios while thinking quickly and critically, and make sound decisions with limited information. The communicator must have excellent listening skills, be assertive but not aggressive, be able to maintain emotional control, and work well in a team setting.

Students must be prepared to work hard, participate actively in all facets of the program, show enthusiasm and commitment, and be willing to accept constructive criticism to attain the skills necessary for employment. Ideally, applicants will have some related education or experience in fields such as victims' assistance or crisis management.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the Faculty's Admission Requirements, which consist of KPU's undergraduate English Proficiency Requirement, the following program admission requirements apply:

- Submission of a researched, 500 word essay detailing the job function of a public safety communicator
- Submission of a resume with 3 current, signed letters of reference
- Completion of a criminal record check through the BC Ministry of Justice, Criminal Records Review Program
- Achieve keyboarding speed of 40 wpm or higher (students are required to complete 50 nwpm to graduate)
- Participation in an orientation interview that includes teamwork exercises and a performance evaluation

Note: A hearing exam, while not mandatory, is recommended as many agencies require them for employment.

Students with mental or physical impairments, who may require program or practicum accommodations, should contact the Program Coordinator at 604.598.6118 to discuss required skills and competencies and a Disability Advisor at 604.599.3233 to ensure appropriate accommodations can be arranged.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

This intensive Certificate program is organized according to the following learning goals:

- The development of an appropriate level of understanding of practical and theoretical concepts that graduates of the program will be expected to apply in industry.
- The provision of hands-on training in our lab with various communications systems similar to those used in the field. The comprehension of human behaviour patterns and development of the interpersonal skills needed to effectively manage crisis calls, relate to co-workers and supervisors, and cope with on-the-job stress.
- The integration of learning through a wide variety of experiential activities, oral and written presentations, field trips, and agency practica.

Components of the program focus on cultural and societal diversity and are weighted heavily for teamwork.

Courses are kept up-to-date through instructors' professional development, through consultations with the program's advisory committee and with the field generally, and through the procurement of appropriate equipment. Program curriculum is continually updated to industry needs.

Semester 1 – September – December

PSCM 1100	Call Processing*	3 credits
PSCM 1120	Radio Communications*	3 credits
PSCM 1140	Human Behaviour I	3 credits
PSCM 1150	Legal & Regulatory Influences	3 credits
PSCM 1280	Public Safety Communications Lab 1*	1.5 credits
PSCM 1400	Emergency Planning*	3 credits

Semester 2 – January – May

PSCM 1200	Police Communications*	3 credits
-----------	------------------------	-----------

PSCM 1240	Human Behaviour II	3 credits
PSCM 1260	Practicum*	3 credits
PSCM 1281	Public Safety Communications Lab 2*	1.5 credits
PSCM 1300	Fire Communications*	3 credits
PSCM 1500	Emergency Medical Communications*	3 credits

* **Note:** Minimum grade of 75% required in order to graduate.

OTHER INFORMATION

Special Equipment

Students will be assessed \$120.00 program equipment fee for specialized headset required in the KPU Tech Cloverdale Simulated Communications Centre.

CREDENTIAL AWARDED

Upon successful completion of this program, students are eligible to receive a **Certificate in Public Safety Communications**.