This study explored how female public relations (PR) managers working in higher-education institutions perceive that they gain influence in their jobs as communicators. To this end, the researcher conducted 12 semi-structured interviews with female, senior-level, PR professionals who work in colleges and universities. The researcher uncovered that female PR managers gain influence in the higher-education setting through collaborative relationships, managing issues/crisis and through their personality characteristics of honesty, decisiveness and tenacity. Although they have management positions, the women who were interviewed remained outnumbered in male-dominated higher-education administration and lacked advanced degrees possessed by many other college and university leaders. The participants have proven themselves in crisis communication yet still lack influence in strategic decision-making, which suggests further change is needed to move them beyond their roles as crisis communicators to become trusted counselors during their institutions’ strategic planning and policy-making. When female PR managers have consistent seats at their higher-education institutions’ decision-making tables, their influence can grow.