



Distinguish Yourself: Earn Your APR

You may ask yourself, "why take the APR exam?" It can seem overwhelming and perhaps intimidating but for those who have gone through the process and achieved their accreditation, the benefits are plentiful. To learn more about the preparation and testing process, please read on.



Frequently Asked Questions About Accreditation

What is Accreditation?

Accreditation in Public Relations is a voluntary certification program for public relations professionals, administered by the Universal Accreditation Board.

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*"Earning the APR is one
my most meaningful
professional and
personal
accomplishments."*

-- Joy Bates Boyle, APR

Behind the Gavel From the President

Accreditation is more than just three letters following your name. It is a mark of distinction for public relations professionals who demonstrate their commitment to the profession and to its ethical practice. APR demonstrates that you have the knowledge, ethics, and experience, and that you care about your profession and about enhancing your personal abilities.

I cannot truly say that I "enjoyed" taking the accreditation examination. I can say, however, that I learned a lot from the process and gained a much greater understanding and appreciation for what we do everyday. I cannot say that the exam is "easy." In fact, I studied seriously before I took the exam and anxiously waited to hear whether or not I passed.

But I can honestly say that it was worth it. Earning my APR was a professional and a personal accomplishment. I am certain that any other APR in the chapter would tell you the same thing. I encourage you to consider sitting for the exam. Julie Davis, APR, is the Accreditation Chair for PRSA Nashville. Her phone number is 615-443-9266, or email her at jdavis@cbrlgroup.com.

Sincerely,
Teresa Corlew, APR
President



Teresa Corlew, APR
2005 Chapter President

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What is the purpose of Accreditation?

The purpose is to unify and advance the profession by identifying those who have demonstrated broad knowledge, experience and professional judgment in the field. The program seeks to improve public relations practice. The designation Accredited in Public Relations (APR) signifies a high professional level of experience and competence.

Why become Accredited?

Increasingly, job listings are specifying APR preferred. Senior public relations professionals have been outspoken in support of Accreditation. "APR is a symbol of professionalism. It demonstrates that individuals have the knowledge, ethics and experience that set them apart. It also demonstrates that they care about their own profession and that they are dedicated to enhancing their own personal abilities." Joe S. Epley, APR, Fellow PRSA, Chairman and CEO, Epley Associates, Charlotte, NC.

What is the fee to take the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations?

The fee is \$385. Several of UAB's participating organizations offer their members a rebate for a portion of the examination fee as a member benefit. Check with your organization's APR chair for details on the rebate.

Is Accreditation good for life?

Yes, with fulfillment of Maintenance of Accreditation requirements and continued membership in a participating organization. Every three years, participating organization members Accredited after January 1, 1998, and PRSA members Accredited after January 1, 1993 must accumulate the required number of points in continuing education, professionalism or service categories as part of the Maintenance of Accreditation Program. This further strengthens the value of the APR credential and keeps professionals actively involved in the currents of the public relations profession.

What is the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations like?

The computer-based portion of the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations is in a multiple-choice format and takes three hours to complete. It tests what public relations professionals do in the 21st century, maintains a high level of quality, is credible and relevant to today's practitioner, and

employs current best practices in professional certification testing. Candidates can take the Examination at their convenience (no longer limited to twice each year) at more than 300 Prometric Testing Centers in the United States and Canada. Strict confidentiality procedures are enforced, and feedback and results are available quickly.

Finally, a Readiness Review prior to the candidate taking the computer-based portion includes a portfolio review and assessment of the candidate's readiness to take the Examination. The local Readiness Review panel (comprising Accredited members) coaches each candidate to determine his or her areas of weakness and

helps identify specific areas of the body of knowledge in which the candidate should focus further study. The panel provides candidates with a specific set of textbook references related to these areas. Candidates cannot take the computer-based Examination until they have advanced from the Readiness Review. Confidentiality throughout the entire process is strictly followed as all members of the Universal Accreditation Board, all volunteers and fellow study partners are bound to confidentiality about the identity of candidates

Who is eligible to take the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations?

The Examination was designed for members of Participating Organizations who have at least five years of paid experience in the full-time practice or in the teaching of public relations and who have earned a bachelor's degree in a communication-specific field (e.g., public relations, journalism, mass communication) or have equivalent work experience, which includes public relations principles, public relations writing, public relations campaigns, research, ethics and law and internship (practical experience under supervision). Also, non-members who belong to member organizations of the North American Public Relations Council (NAPRC) and who meet the same requirements as members are eligible.

How do I apply to take the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations?

If you are eligible to take the Examination, you can download an application form (PDF - 58k), fill it out and send it to the contact and address listed on the application.

"To me, accreditation validates to clients my ability to counsel and understand public relations strategies and programs. It assures clients that I'm committed to and serious about the practice of public relations."

**- Kathy Burnham, APR
(Since 1992)**

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What happens after I apply to take the Examination?

Once your eligibility is confirmed by the UAB, you may request a Readiness Review from your local Accreditation chair. You may prepare for your Readiness Review whenever you want - you can start today - by downloading the Readiness Review Questionnaire and instructions for preparing your portfolio. Prepare as early as possible by downloading test-taking tips and other information from the Accreditation Web site and start preparing. Once a local Accreditation Chair has scheduled your Readiness Review, you must submit the completed Readiness Review Questionnaire to your Readiness Review Panel no fewer than 15 business days before your scheduled review. Local PRSA Chapters and Participating Organizations may be able to schedule Readiness Reviews at different times, so work closely with your local Accreditation chair to be sure your intended schedule works with your local organizations.

How can I prepare for the Examination?

A Candidate Preparation Guide is available at www.praccreditation.org. Contact your local Accreditation chair to learn more about how to prepare and what local resources, such as preparation courses, are available. An online, self-study course also is available for an additional fee. If you are an independent member and not affiliated with a UAB Participating Organization, contact UAB for the Accreditation chair nearest you.

What is the Readiness Review?

The Readiness Review is a one- to two-hour interview and portfolio presentation that determines whether your Readiness Review panel will recommend that the UAB advance you to the computer-based Examination. It includes a lengthy and detailed written Readiness Review Questionnaire submission, a portfolio review and an assessment of your readiness to take the Examination. The Readiness Review panel (comprising three accredited members) will coach you to help you identify areas in which your preparation is not adequate for success in the computer-based Examination. The panel also will help direct you to specific areas of the body of knowledge in which you should focus further study before taking the computer-based portion of the Examination. And the Readiness Review panel will give you a specific set of textbook references related to these areas. Remember, you cannot take the computer-based Examination until the Readiness Review panel recommends that you advance past the Readiness Review.

What if I am not advanced after the Readiness Review?

Go back and study the areas that you and your Readiness Review panel agreed are areas where you need strength. Review the tips for preparing for the Readiness Review and continue to study for the computer-based portion of the Examination as you prepare to request another Readiness Review. (You must wait at least ninety (90) days after your first Readiness Review to request another.)

How will I know if the Readiness Review panel has recommended my advancement to the computer-based Examination?

You will be notified by the UAB how it has responded to the recommendation of your Readiness Review panel to advance or not to advance you to the computer-based portion of the Examination.

To learn more about accreditation, please visit <http://www.praccreditation.org>.

“APR accreditation made a positive impact on how I do my job and how I view the practice of public relations. The knowledge gained during the months of self-study helped crystallize many prescribed theories and tactics while exposing new ones. I work for a professional association. Completing the APR requirements, coupled with ongoing study, helps me keep pace with current best practices and lets me interact with peers. Finally, earning the APR was a challenge; the sense of accomplishment earned is something that will last throughout my career.”

— Edward M. Bury, APR Director Of Public Relations CCIM Institute

PRSA and the American Red Cross Present the "Power of Two" Program

In an effort to channel the specific skills of public relations professionals in times of crisis, PRSA and the American Red Cross joined forces to create "The Power of Two" a partnership designed to recruit, train and utilize public relations professionals to help manage disasters on local and national levels.

By becoming a registered member of this national database of communications professionals ready to serve, PRSA and PRSSA members can translate their compassion and skills into immediate action for the American Red Cross disaster relief efforts.

Benefits of Participation

Involvement in "The Power of Two" provides PRSA members with several important benefits:

- On-the-job crisis communications training and experience
- Chance to use communications talents in times of need
- The reward of working to help disaster victims in their time of need
- Satisfaction knowing that you have participated in the development and execution of communications that help save lives
- Maintenance credits for your APR credential

Levels of Involvement for PRSA Members

Regardless of the amount of time you feel you have to give, there is a role for you in "The Power of Two" program. The national database enrolls communications professionals in four levels of involvement.

2 hours: For those who want to help, but can only donate two hours a year to Red Cross efforts. Volunteers will be asked to write copy such as PSAs or video segments for training classes.

2 Days: For those who want to be more involved. Volunteers will serve as media spokespersons at the beginning of a local or national disaster.

2 Weeks: For those professionals who can travel to a disaster site in their area or across the country to provide PR support for large-scale disaster relief operation.

2 Times Per Year: Provide expertise as a member of the Red Cross PR Planning Committee

To find out more about this program, please visit <http://www.prsa.org/features/poweroftwo/poweroftwo.asp>.



Young Professionals Event Features Vanderbilt's Schoenfeld

The Young Professionals Committee is pleased to announce its April event will feature Michael J.

Schoenfeld, Vanderbilt University's vice chancellor for public affairs.

The session will take place

Monday, April 11, at Vanderbilt University's Kirkland Hall.

Networking and appetizers start at 5:30 p.m.; the presentation will begin at 6 p.m. To RSVP, contact

Katie Benson (katie.benson@gay-lordentertainment.com or 615-

316-6415). This event is presented free of charge by PRSA

Nashville's Young Professionals Committee.



*Michael
Schoenfeld
Vice Chancellor of
Public Affairs
Vanderbilt
University*

About Schoenfeld

Schoenfeld serves as the chief communications and government relations officer and spokesman for the University. Reporting directly to Chancellor Gordon Gee, Schoenfeld has broad responsibility for Vanderbilt's local, regional and national external affairs, government and community relations, and special events. He also holds a faculty appointment as a lecturer in the Department of Leadership and Organizations in Vanderbilt's Peabody College of Education and Human Development.

As the vice chancellor for public affairs, Schoenfeld oversees a wide range of programs and offices, including University and Medical Center news services, science and research communications, the Register (Vanderbilt's weekly faculty/staff newspaper), federal, state and local government relations, speechwriting, community and neighborhood liaison, publications and creative services, online services, University special events (including Commencement), and Vanderbilt's Washington, DC, office.

Schoenfeld joined Vanderbilt in 1997 as the University's first vice chancellor for media relations. Since his arrival, Vanderbilt's internal and external communications efforts have been recognized as among the most creative and innovative in higher education, earning a number of awards from professional societies and associations. In 2000, Business Nashville magazine named him one of the 40 most influential Nashvillians under the age of 40, and the Nashville Scene recognized him as the top public relations executive in Nashville in 2000 and again in 2001.

2005 Chapter Leadership

Officers

President	Teresa Corlew, APR
President Elect	Vicki Bagwell, APR
Secretary	Stacy Brewer
Treasurer	Marcia Colburn
Immediate Past President	Greg Bailey, APR

Directors At Large

Trey Campbell	Kearstin Patterson
Laura Ladd	Todd Smith

Assembly Delegates

Marcie Smeck, APR	Susan Hart, APR
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Committees

Accreditation	Julie Davis, APR
Apollo Award	Heather Buckner
Finance	Marcia Colburn
Hercules Award	Susan Barnes, APR
Membership	Vicki Bagwell, APR
Newsletter	Jennifer Wigal, APR
Parthenon Awards	Trey Campbell
Programs/Professional Development	Sue Amos
Public Relations	Kenneth Townshend
Public Service	Dustine Deming, APR
Young Professionals	Katie Benson Kim Rucker

PRSA Nashville Silver Partners:

PRSA Nashville extends sincere thanks to the following companies for their continued commitment to our chapter.



PR Newswire
United Business Media



Welcome New Members

Carrie Anna Criado
Director, Public Relations
U.S. Legal Forms, Inc.

Emily Cundiff
Mkt Brand Rep
Whirlpool Corporation

Calendar of Events

- April 5:** Teleseminar: "How Do You Measure Up? Developing Effective Measures for Communications"
- April 5:** Teleseminar: "Cut Through the Clutter"
- April 11:** Young Professionals Event: Michael Schoenfeld. Vanderbilt University's Kirkland Hall, 5:30 p.m.
- April 12:** PRSA Nashville's 19th Annual Parthenon Awards Presentation. Parthenon Ballroom at Nashville Marriott (near Vanderbilt University). Silent auction and cash bar starts at 6 p.m.; dinner and awards presentation starts at 7 p.m.
- April 12:** Teleseminar: "Using Relationship Management at Your Organization"
- April 14:** Teleseminar: "How Blogs Are Changing Public Relations - And How You Can Adapt"
- April 14:** Teleseminar: "Getting the Most Out of Surveys"
- April 21:** Teleseminar: "How to Hit It Out of the Ballpark When Presenting to Senior Management"
- April 28:** Teleseminar: "Who Is a Journalist Now?"
- April 28:** Teleseminar: "Inside the Mind of a CEO"

For more information:

Local Events - Jackie Cavnar: jccavnar@cs.com or 615-661-6752; Teleseminars - Visit the professional development seminar section of www.prsa.org.

PR Ink is a monthly publication of the Nashville Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. To submit comments, ideas or news, please contact Jennifer Wigal at 615-591-3784 or jwigal@paymaxx.net. Submissions are due on the second Friday of each month.