



Steps to Earning Your APR

April 2018

What is Accreditation In Public Relations (APR)

- Professional credential
- Earned through a rigorous process
- Demonstrates:
 - ✓ Commitment to professional advancement
 - ✓ Broad and strategic public relations knowledge, skills and abilities
 - ✓ High professional level of experience and competence

www.praccreditation.org



Universal Accreditation Board (UAB)

Public relations “participating organizations”

- **National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA)**
- **Public Relations Society of America (PRSA)**
- National Association of Government Communicators
- Religion Communicators Council



Eligibility and Fee

- Who is eligible?
 - Members of participating organizations
 - Several years of paid, full-time professional experience, or in teaching or administration of public relations courses in an accredited college or university
- Fee is \$385 (plus \$25 registration fee)
 - Some associations rebate part of fee to members once accredited
 - Check to see if your district will pay and/or reimburse you.
- Good “for life,” with fulfillment of maintenance of Accreditation requirements and continued membership in participating organization



Five Steps to Lifelong APR

1. Study

Local study groups, MoSPRA monthly sessions; online course, textbooks, APR Study Guide

2. Apply (12-month timeline to pass panel presentation and exam)

3. Questionnaire/Panel Presentation

4. Computer-based Examination

5. Maintenance



1. Study

- Use APR Study Guide
- Textbooks (*Cutlip & Center's Effective Public Relations; Strategies and Tactics* by Wilcox and others)
- Work on your own or with a cohort:

MoSPRA APR study sessions, in-person study groups, online course (online2learn.net)

- Use resources at www.praccreditation.org



2. Apply

- You decide when to apply.
- Print application form from APR website.
- Submit completed eligibility form with payment (\$385 exam fee plus \$25 registration; NSPRA sends \$110 back after successful completion of exam.)
- Receive notification of eligibility.
- Complete entire process within one year of application being approved.



2A- Prepare and Study More...

- Identify weaknesses and focus heavily on those areas.
- Work on your Communications Plan
- Study groups, MoSPRA APR sessions, individual studying; online course



3. Panel Presentation

- Includes a questionnaire and portfolio review demonstrating RPIE/RACE process of a Communications Plan
 - Your organization and your role
 - Your experience
- Assesses competence in several areas not easily judged other ways and whether candidate is ready to succeed on the computer-based Examination
- Conducted locally by a professional public relations panel
 - 3 Accredited members
 - Recommend to the UAB to Advance or Not Advance the candidate



4. Computer-based Examination (CBE)

- Computer-delivered and scored
- 100% multiple-choice questions – mainly situation analysis, scenario questions, examples; 132 scored questions; additional beta questions also included but not scored
- Gives you up to 3 hours 45 minutes
- Testing process is administered by Prometric at a local site
- Results are immediate; final letter comes a few weeks later



KSAs Assessed

- The examination process tests knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) in these areas:
 - Researching, Planning, Implementing, Evaluating Programs (33%)
 - Leading the Public Relations Function (18%)
 - Managing Relationships (15%)
 - Ethics/Law (13%)
 - Managing Issues and Crisis Communications (13%)
 - Understanding Communications Models, Theories and History of the Profession (8%)



5. Maintenance

- Remain current and involved in profession and professional growth
 - Continuing education and professional development (*5 of 10 points required*)
 - Professionalism
 - Public service
 - Keep membership with NSPRA, PRSA or other affiliated professional organization
- Submit form and \$50 fee every three years



Information and Resources:

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MoSPRA APR Google Drive folders (for those in study cohort)

www.praccreditation.org

https://www.nspra.org/professional_development/accreditation

www.Online2learn.net

