

Southeastern Wisconsin in Chapter PRSA
2017 Path to Accreditation in Public Relations



DECEMBER

- Register for SE Wisconsin Chapter “Path to APR”: A 10-month preparation course designed for public relations professionals who want to earn accreditation using independent study, small work teams and professionally guided learning tools. Participants need to [pay the application fee](#) in late February to work toward your accreditation.
- Review your employee handbook and/or ask about your employer’s continuing education and professional development policies in regard to: reimbursement of all or part of APR application fees; purchase of study materials; excused time off for preparation, study and testing sessions. Be prepared to [explain the value of APR to your organization](#).

JANUARY

- Participate in the one-hour JumpStart session to learn more about the APR process. ***This session will be offered in January.***
- Identify your [Readiness Review](#) case study. Suggestions include past chapter Paragon and/or national Anvil award submissions or strategies completed for a client. Your APR chair has examples to demonstrate acceptable portfolios for this part of the process.

FEBRUARY/MARCH

- Participate in two Readiness Review preparation sessions; a session lasts approximately one hour. ***These sessions will take place in February.***
 - Download Readiness Review [Candidate Questionnaire](#) and begin working on your answers.
 - Select a public relations plan or award entry you have completed that reflects your experience. View page 43 of the [APR Study Guide](#) to view the industry standard on public relations plan formats.
- **Submit by Feb. 28** your [application form](#) and \$385 fee to Universal Accreditation Board; receive notification of eligibility from UAB within four weeks. Candidates have *one year from the date UAB authorizes participation in the Advance Readiness Review to complete computer-based APR examination.*

- *NOTE:* Upon passing the computer-based APR exam, PRSA members are eligible for a \$110 rebate from PRSA national and a \$65 rebate from the Southeast WI PRSA chapter. In addition, the Southeast WI PRSA will award you with your APR pin upon earning accreditation.

APRIL

- Complete [Readiness Review Questionnaire](#) and send electronically to [Kelly Savage](#) by **April 1**.
- ***Readiness Reviews will take place in April.***
 - Present your Readiness Review case study [portfolio](#) and respond to interview questions; allow one to two hours for your review session. Bring four copies of this portfolio. One is for you, and the other three are for your panel members.
 - Panelists score your knowledge, skills and abilities in 16 areas and consider your readiness to proceed.
 - Panelists help you identify gaps in your preparedness for the computer-based examination.
- UAB notifies you to advance/not advance to the computer-based examination.
 - When “Advanced,” you’ll receive your candidate ID# to use to schedule the computer-based examination.
 - If not “Advanced,” you can repeat Readiness Review after 90 days. You can appeal the result to the UAB after two re-takes of Readiness Review.
 - If not “Advanced,” your Readiness Review panelists can help you identify ways to strengthen your Readiness Review presentation.

MAY

- Individually or in recommended study groups, review KSAs for the exam. During these sessions, discuss Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSA) strength and weaknesses, best practices for studying, etc.
- OPTIONAL: [Online Study Course](#) at an additional cost of \$195. Chapter provides online course orientation. If more than five people sign up for the online course, the cost will be less.
- Access free preparation resources, e.g., [APR Study Guide](#), [Candidate's Instructions for Readiness Review](#), Short Bookshelf, local prep courses, mentoring programs, etc.
 - Refresh your knowledge, skills and abilities by reviewing the general text of your choice and one or more of the specialized books from the Short Bookshelf.

- Use the body of knowledge and preparation resources to fill gaps in your knowledge, skills and abilities, e.g., areas where your experience is limited.

JUNE

- Choose a case study that focuses on a specific KSA. Set up a PR strategy based on the [study guide](#) (see page 43). Let APR Chair know when you'd like to gather the group to present your case study via conference call.



Case-ClassroomCutBack.pdf



Case-Landfill.pdf

JULY/AUGUST

- Candidates prepare assigned case studies and study independently from previously identified resources. Candidates can partner on case study presentations.

SEPTEMBER

- ***Present case study to peers during a conference call in September. Conference call number will be provided at a later date.***
- Review online test-taking [module](#) and 20 sample APR questions
- At least 30 days in advance of when you want to sit for the exam, schedule computer-based exam at a Prometric testing center using your candidate ID# via Prometric's Web site at www.prometric.com or call 800-274-1900; use credit card for payment.
 - NOTE: Prometric experiences peak demand June - August and October - December. During these times, it is a must that you schedule your appointment at least 30 days in advance of your preferred date.

OCTOBER

- While you have until your one-year date identified by national PRSA to take the computer-based examination, it's recommended that you take the exam in October while the knowledge you've gained along the APR path is still fresh in your mind, as well as before moving into the holiday season.
 - Use as much of the time available as you want to complete the examination, which tests areas of knowledge, skills and abilities:
 - 30 percent research, planning, implementing and evaluating programs

- 15 percent ethics and law
 - 15 percent communication models and theories
 - 10 percent business literacy
 - 10 percent management skills and issues
 - 5 percent media relations
 - 2 percent using information technology efficiently
 - 2 percent history of and current issues in public relations
 - 1 percent advanced communication skills
- Receive immediate but unofficial pass/did not pass feedback, in addition to your strengths and weaknesses in tested [knowledge, skills and abilities](#).
 - Receive official pass or fail notice from UAB within three to four weeks.
 - If you passed, the Universal Accreditation Board will grant Accreditation.
 - Receive notice from Chair Kelly Savage of presentation and/or celebration event, depending on local organization.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

- Upon official UAB notification of obtaining APR, update your official personnel files with current employer, resume, LinkedIn profile, PRSA national and Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter online directories; wear APR pin to all future PRSA functions.
- If a retake is necessary, submit your retake payment (\$200) to national PRSA. Send Kathy Mulvihill a note to learn where to send payment (kathy.mulvihill@prsa.org). Candidates must pay and retake the exam within six months. Repeat steps #2, #5 and #6.

Please direct all questions about the APR process to SE Wisconsin Chapter APR Chair Kelly Savage, APR at 414-943-4946 or Kelly.savage.lvv0@statefarm.com.