



Press Release

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Universities Help College Seniors Stand Out With Public Relations' Industry Certificate

NEW YORK (April 10, 2018) — Completing a degree in public relations (PR) or a related field is a valued achievement for entry into the competitive PR job market. In the last four years, 221 students nationwide have also chosen to #StandOutinPR by earning the [Certificate in Principles of Public Relations](#). Primarily driven by their personal passion for public relations and to better distinguish themselves among growing competition, the students are also gaining support from their professors and industry professionals.

In fact, three out of four students who have pursued the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations considered their professor to be their mentor throughout the process. This only seems natural when many colleges and universities are offering preparatory courses or classes. Increasingly, students also mention support from local PRSA Chapters and professionals holding their Accreditation in Public Relations (APR). As important, institutions are beginning to recognize the value of the Certificate. Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University (Virginia Tech) announced a new policy last year, to be fully instituted in 2020, that requires all graduating PR majors to take the Certificate examination.

"The Certificate in Principles of Public Relations has given our public relations majors third-party validation that they know their stuff and helped them stand out in the job market," said Douglas Cannon, Ph.D., APR+M, Fellow PRSA, of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. "Nearly 90 percent of the Virginia Tech students who have taken the examination since 2014 have passed."

The Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Program is growing, having added 51 Certificate recipients and 13 additional participating colleges and universities last year. See the full [list of 2017 Certificate recipients](#).

The Certificate examination, which is earned by passing an examination designed to test the foundational knowledge of those entering the public relations profession, is administrated by the Universal Accreditation Board (UAB) and gives students a leg up in securing sought-after positions in the profession. The examination tests students' knowledge of concepts such as:

- Communication models and theories
- Business literacy
- Ethics and law
- Program research, planning, implementation and evaluation

“Each April, the UAB celebrates APR Month as an acknowledgement of the thousands of PR professionals nationwide who have chosen to advance the profession by earning their Accreditation in Public Relations,” said Mitchell Marovitz, Ph.D., APR, Fellow PRSA, and 2018 chair of the UAB. “This year, we want to take this opportunity to also focus on the Certificate Program and its [complementary relationship](#) to the APR professional certification in helping to advance the new professional.” He continued, “We’re inspired by the hundreds of PR professors and professionals who support and mentor these Certificate candidates.”

To support the Certificate in Public Relations, professionals should:

- Connect with local colleges/universities to ensure they are participating in the Certificate Program.
- Encourage senior students and/or recent graduates to pursue the Certificate.
- Volunteer to serve as a mentor to students pursuing the Certificate.
- Serve as a study course speaker for the examination preparatory classes (if applicable).

To participate in the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Program, students must be within six months of graduation (either before or after) from an accredited college or university and whose degree is in public relations or a related area of study. They also must be members of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) or student member of another UAB participating organization, and take a course specifically designated for Certificate preparation either online or on campus.

For more information on the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations, visit www.prcertificate.org.

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The UAB was established in 1998 by a coalition of public relations professional organizations, which includes the [Asociación de Relacionistas Profesionales de Puerto Rico](#), [Florida Public Relations Association](#), [California Association of Public Information Officers](#), [Maine Public Relations Council](#), [National Association of Government Communicators](#), [National School Public Relations Association](#), [Public Relations Society of America \(PRSA\)](#), [Religion Communicators Council](#) and the [Southern Public Relations Federation](#). Each organization contributes resources and senior-level volunteer members representing all segments of the public relations profession. More information about the Certificate and the Universal Accreditation Board is available at www.praccreditation.org.