



Press Release

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Number of Public Relations Professionals Who Earned Accredited in Public Relations With Military Emphasis (APR+M) increased in 2016

NEW YORK (Feb. 17, 2017) — In 2016, 10 public relations professionals earned the Accredited in Public Relations with Military Communications (APR+M) credential, representing a 43 percent increase over seven credentialed APR+M professionals in 2015. Public relations practitioners earning the Accredited in Public Relations (APR) credential decreased by 16 percent, with 150 earning Accreditation in 2016 compared to 179 APRs in 2015. For a full list of those individuals who earned their APR or APR+M in 2016, visit www.praccreditation.org.

“In any given year, there are a lot of factors that affect the number of people who earn Accreditation,” said Judy Katzel, APR, the 2017 chair of the Universal Accreditation Board (UAB). “Last year we started a new mentoring program for APR+M, and there is increased awareness of the credential among the Armed Forces. This may have contributed to the increase in APR+Ms. Meanwhile, the number of new APRs dropped, which could be due to many things including an increase in participation in 2015 prior to the updated 2016 Examination.”

The Universal Accreditation Board also released its number of young professionals who earned the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations in 2016. The number of students and recent grads passing the examination increased 29 percent to 58 (compared to 45 in 2015). Now three years old, the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations is an entry-level certificate designed to demonstrate a fundamental level of knowledge for college graduates entering the PR profession and related fields. Students are eligible to apply for the Certificate examination within six months of graduation. To date, [168 students](#) have earned the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations.

The UAB instituted a number of changes in 2016 to maintain the APR credential’s rigor and relevance:

- Released an updated computer-based Examination to align with changes in our professional practice including a comprehensive review and revision of the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) the APR assesses.
- Revised all study materials to correspond with updates to the Examination.
- Launched the “It Takes A PRo” campaign to heighten awareness of the APR credential.

- Added two more organizations to the UAB (National Association of Government Communicators and California Association of Public Information Officers), thus extending the APR's reach to more PR professionals.
- Reviewed and renamed the Readiness Review to the Panel Presentation, changing it from an assessment of readiness for the Examination to the first step in a two-step process.

Year over year APR statistics:

- Overall the number of individuals with approved APR applications dropped 11 percent from 2015 to 2016 (240 to 214).
- Readiness Review (called Panel Presentation beginning January 2017) participation, an in-person presentation and assessment of strategic public relations skills and knowledge, decreased significantly (248 to 165).
- The Readiness Review Advanced rate decreased 26 percent to 145 candidates being Advanced (compared to 207 in 2015).
- Computer-based Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations (CBE) participation, a computerized assessment of strategic public relations knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs), decreased by 41 percent (317 to 188).
- While fewer candidates passed the Examination (179 in 2015, 150 in 2016), the Examination pass rate increased from 56 percent in 2015 to 80 percent in 2016 — a reflection of the updated 2016 Examination, better aligning with professional practice.

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The Universal Accreditation Board (UAB) administers the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations and coordinates all activities related to the Accredited in Public Relations (APR) designation. The UAB was established in 1998 by a coalition of public relations professional organizations, which now includes nine organizations: the Asociación de Relacionistas Profesionales de Puerto Rico, California Association of Public Information Officials, Florida Public Relations Association, Maine Public Relations Council, National Association of Government Communicators, National School Public Relations Association, Public Relations Society of America, Religion Communicators Council, and Southern Public Relations Federation. Each organization contributes resources and senior-level volunteer members representing all segments of the public relations profession. For more information about the APR designation and the UAB, visit www.praccreditation.org.