

Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Examination Frequently Asked Questions



Q. Who administers the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations program?

The Universal Accreditation Board (UAB) comprises nine participating public relations professional organizations. The UAB also administers the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations (APR).

Q. What is the purpose of the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations?

The Certificate in Principles of Public Relations differentiates new college graduates in public relations and related majors from their peers who have not passed the Certificate Examination.

Q. How do students earn the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations?

First, under the direction of a faculty coordinator, students must take a university-sanctioned preparatory course (either for-credit or non-credit) OR participate in the Certificate of Principles of Public Relations [Online Study Course](#). Second, students must pass a computer-based Examination that covers basic knowledge of public relations principles.

Q. Who is eligible to take the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Examination?

Students who are (a) within six months of graduation (before or after) from an accredited college or university whose undergraduate or master's degree is in public relations or a related area of study; AND (b) members of the Public Relations Student Society of America or student member of another UAB Participating Organization, such as the Florida Public Relations Association or the Southern Public Relations Federation.

Q. Why do students need this Certificate in addition to their degree in public relations and related majors?

Earning the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations gives new graduates an advantage in a competitive job market.

Q. What does a university need to do to participate in the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations program?

To participate in the Certificate program, a university needs a designated faculty member to coordinate the Certificate program onsite. The faculty coordinator will certify that students are eligible and may conduct a preparatory course (either for-credit or non-credit) for student candidates.

Q. How do students apply for the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations?

Students must fill out the application and include payment. The faculty coordinator responsible at each university will collect all student applications and submit them as a group to UAB at the address indicated.

Q. What does a university-based preparatory course involve for the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations?

The UAB has no specific requirement as to how the preparatory course is administered. Some schools offer the course for academic credit, while some rely on Accredited members of the professional community to conduct the study sessions.

Q. What does the university's faculty coordinator for the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations program need to do?

Each university's faculty coordinator for the Certificate program must:

- a. Certify that students are undergraduate or master's students within six months (before or after) graduation, majoring in public relations or a related field.
- b. Certify that students are a dues-paid member of the Public Relations Student Society of America or dues-paid student member of another UAB Participating Organization, such as the Florida Public Relations Association or the Southern Public Relations Federation.
- c. Organize the university's preparatory course or ensure students have access to the [online course](#).
- d. Certify that students have taken the preparatory course or [online course](#).
- e. Collect all student applications and payments from the students in school.
- f. Forward all student applications and payments to the Universal Accreditation Board, PRSA, 120 Wall Street, 21 Floor, New York, NY 10005.

Q. Why should universities encourage students to participate in the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations program?

Participation in the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations program may help university public relations programs with their internal assessment efforts.

Q. How was the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Examination developed?

The Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Examination is the result of five years of research and development by subject matter experts in public relations. The Certificate Examination has been thoroughly tested for validity.

Q. Do students have to study for the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Examination?

Yes. Students must participate in a formal study course offered by their university or local chapter of a Universal Accreditation Board participating organization (e.g., PRSA, Florida Public Relations Association or the Southern Public Relations Federation) OR complete the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations [Online Study Course](#).

Q. What resources are available for studying?

The Certificate in Principles of Public Relations [Study Guide](#) plus a "Short Bookshelf" of suggested readings are available on the [website](#).

Q. What does the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Examination cover?

Basic knowledge of public relations principles, with emphasis on the four-step process of public relations and on ethics. The full listing of knowledge, skills and abilities tested can be found on the [website](#).

Q. Do students have to be a member of a professional organization to take the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Examination?

Yes, students must be a member of the Public Relations Student Society of America (this includes affiliate members of PRSSA) or student member of another UAB Participating Organization, such as the Florida Public Relations Association or the Southern Public Relations Federation.

Q. How much does it cost to take the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Examination?

Students pay \$150 (\$25 application fee plus \$125 examination fee). This does not include any tuition or fees that may be charged by individual universities. The Certificate in Public Relations [Online Study Course](#) is \$50. However, students may opt for an in-person class, if offered, at their universities.

Q. Where do students take the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Examination?

The Certificate Examination is taken at Prometric Testing Centers. A list of locations can be found at www.prometric.com/uab. Students will need to make an appointment with Prometric directly. Complete instructions will be sent to students via email after their application is processed for the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations.

Q. If students fail the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Examination, can they take it again?

Yes, within 90 days of receiving their Examination results. An additional fee of \$100 is required to retake the Examination.

Q. After students apply and are accepted to take the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Examination, how long do they have to do so?

Since the time limit for taking the Certificate Examination is within six months of graduation (before or after), students must complete the Examination within six months after graduation.

Q. Who is notified of the student's results after they take the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Examination? Will the student's university or employer know about the results?

Of course, the individual student is notified. The faculty coordinator of the Certificate program for each school may also be notified. It is up to the student and schools if they want to notify anyone else. Aggregate results may be reported to the UAB.

Q. Will potential employers recognize the value of the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations that successful students have earned?

The UAB has an aggressive marketing campaign with employers of new public relations graduates to make them aware of the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations and what it means in their hiring decisions. By including the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations on their resumes, successful students give themselves an opportunity to explain this Certificate to a potential employer and thereby set themselves apart from others. Students who earn their Certificate should also refer to the "Stand Out in PR Toolkit" for communication guidance.

<http://www.praccreditation.org/teach/educators/StandOut>

Q. If students pass the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Examination, can they call themselves Accredited?

No. Students who earn the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations cannot use any kind of initials after their names or claim Accreditation. Successful students are encouraged to indicate on their resumes that they have earned the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations. Students who earn their Certificate should also refer to the "Stand Out in PR Toolkit" for communication guidance.

<http://www.praccreditation.org/teach/educators/StandOut>

Q. When may students take the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations?

It is suggested, but not required, that practitioners have five years of professional experience before attempting the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations.

Q. If I have other questions, whom do I contact?

Contact Kathy Mulvihill at (212) 460-1436 or accred@prsa.org.