

2007/08 CPRS Annual Report

National Council on Accreditation

Sharlene Smith, APR, FCPRS
Presiding Officer

The APR is the highest global professional standard of excellence in public relations. Employers and clients hiring public relations practitioners with an APR are getting leaders in public relations that are recognized in and outside of the profession for their knowledge, experience, expertise and ethics.

The National Council on Accreditation is responsible for developing, implementing and maintaining the Society's accreditation program. On behalf of my colleagues on Council, it is my pleasure to report on the following results and activities for the fiscal year 2007/08.

Accreditation Examination Results

In 2007, 29 candidates participated in the accreditation program. Of those, 17 candidates passed the exams and attained their APR, two deferred, three failed the work sample, and seven failed the written and/or oral exams. The pass rate dropped to 71% from 85% in 2006 and 76% in 2005. The pass rate reflects those candidates who completed all three components of the program (the work sample, oral exam and written exam), attained a passing grade and their APR. For information on the program pass rate over time, please see chart A below.

Congratulations to these top performers and all the new 2007 APRs for achieving this milestone in their career.

Highest overall mark - Léa Werthman APR, Ottawa/Gatineau

Highest work sample mark - Gregory Harris APR, Manitoba

Highest oral exam mark - Nadia Hinds APR, Nova Scotia

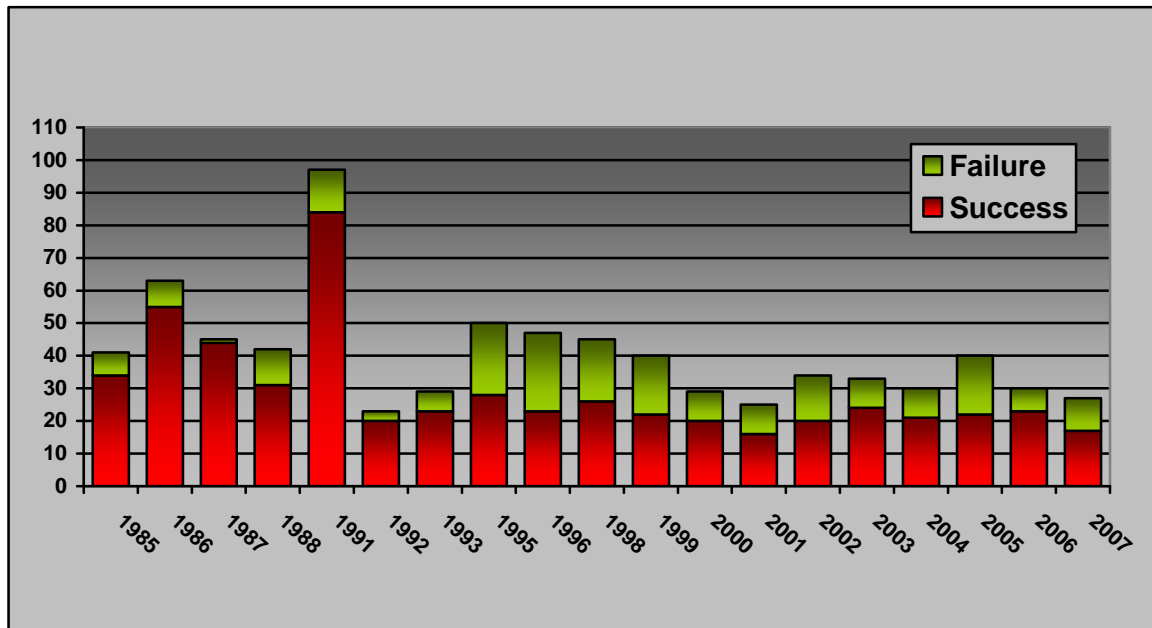
Highest written exam mark - Léa Werthman, Ottawa/Gatineau

Marc Angers APR - Bathurst, NB
Catherine Bianco APR - Dundas, ON
Mark Buzan APR - Gatineau, ON
Caroline Émond APR - Montréal, QC
Vanessa Greebe APR - Victoria, BC
Fran Gregory APR - Kitchener, ON
Gregory Harris APR - Winnipeg, MB
Julia Harvie-Shemko APR - Red Deer, AB
Sharon Hawrelak APR - Edmonton, AB

Nadia Hinds APR - Halifax, NS
Melinda Jolley APR - Victoria, BC
Louis Moubarak APR - Montréal, QC
Ian Ross APR - Toronto, ON
François Taschereau APR - Montréal, QC
Isabelle Thellen APR - Montréal, QC
Richard Truscott APR - Calgary, AB
Léa Werthman APR - Ottawa, ON

As of April 2008, 31 members from 11 chapters have indicated their intention to participate in the examination process.

Chart A – Passes and Failures Since 1985



Appeals

Throughout the examination process, procedures exist to allow candidates to have their work re-evaluated. In 2007/08, there were four successful work sample appeals, four unsuccessful written exam appeals and one successful oral exam appeal. This is up considerably from three appeals the previous year.

Maintenance

Accreditation maintenance strengthens the value of the APR designation for the benefit of us as practitioners, and our employers and clients. As of April 10, 2008, 39% of Members with their APR (191 out of 491) have maintained their accreditation, up significantly from 20% the previous year.

Satisfaction Survey Results

Annually since 2006, candidates and volunteers within the accreditation program have been surveyed to assess satisfaction, and identify areas where things are working well and where improvements are needed. Following are the highlights from those surveys for 2008.

Candidates told us they are:

- More satisfied with the fairness and appropriateness of the marking process, expectations for the work sample, meeting timelines, the appeal process, national recognition and the program's worth and helpfulness in career development.
- Less satisfied with the availability of mentorship and coaching, the time allotted for the written exam and local recognition.

Overall, candidate satisfaction has improved steadily over the past two years.

Volunteers told us they are:

- More satisfied with the fairness and appropriateness of the marking process, on-line information, notification and appeal process, the efficiency of the grading process, and the information available to make grading easy to understand.

- There were no areas where volunteers were less satisfied, however a number of individual valuable suggestions were made to enhance program delivery.
- Overall, program volunteer satisfaction has improved and is very high.

Annual Work Plan Results

With the input of program volunteers and last year's candidate and volunteer satisfaction surveys, Council adopted and implemented a work plan over the past year with the following objectives:

- Increase awareness of APR,
- Support and enhance local recognition and promotion of APR,
- Work on key areas of improvement from the candidate & volunteer satisfaction surveys,
- Work with the Education Council and Professional Development Committee to support accreditation, and
- Support and increase candidate preparation.

To support achieving these objectives, the following activities were implemented over the past year:

- Quarterly conference calls for Accreditation Chairs,
- Quarterly conference call for Regional Examiners,
- A new Grader Handbook that provides guidance on marking was distributed,
- The successful *Globe and Mail* ad promoting new APRs was repeated,
- Three teleconferences to orient new and experienced graders were held,
- A teleseminar for candidates was held with Grace Diffey APR, Deputy Presiding Officer of Eligibility, Kathleen Malley APR, an accreditation grader, and new APRs Vincent Power APR and Brenda Sweeney APR providing guidance on what to expect and how to prepare a successful work sample,
- The candidate and volunteer satisfaction surveys were repeated, showing that the accreditation program has had significant improvements in the quality and efficiency of the program and greater satisfaction for both volunteers and candidates,
- Banners promoting the APR have been produced and will be provided to each Local Society for promotion at local events,
- A handbook to support Accreditation Chairs in promoting accreditation, supporting candidates and recognizing them is being developed, and
- The new online accreditation maintenance system was successfully implemented.

Acknowledgements

There are many people in the Society who make significant contributions to the accreditation program.

National Council on Accreditation

In addition to developing a strategic plan for the program and an annual work plan, Council meets bi-monthly to provide oversight to the examination process and establish program policy.

- Sharlene Smith APR, FCPRS, Presiding Officer (Vancouver Island)
- Susan Jamieson-McLarnon APR, Chief Examiner (Vancouver)
- Grace Diffey APR, Deputy Presiding Officer, Eligibility (Hamilton)
- Daniel Granger APR, FCPRS, Deputy Presiding Officer, Appeals (Québec)
- Don Boynton APR, Lead, Accreditation Maintenance (Calgary)
- Sarah Jones APR, Education Council Liaison (Toronto)
- Beverlee Loat APR, Lead, Volunteer Management (Edmonton)

- Beatrice Pepper APR, Board Liaison (Québec)
- Barb Pollock APR, FCPRS, Lead, Promotion & Marketing (Regina)
- Richard Sparkes APR, FCPRS, Accreditation Chair Liaison (Newfoundland)
- Anita Wasiuta APR, Board Liaison (Vancouver Island)

Grace Diffey and I have completed our terms on Council. Sincere thanks to Grace for the significant contribution she has made to the program. Francine Gaudet (Vancouver), an experienced grader and Regional Examiner, will be joining Council. Richard Sparkes, also a long-time volunteer with the program, has been appointed the new Presiding Officer.

Regional Examiners

There are five Regional Examiners who steward the examination process within their respective regions, coordinating the written and oral exams, and the grading teams. Their work is integral to the program.

Richard Sparkes APR, FCPRS – Atlantic Canada

Guy Litalien ARP – Quebec

Peggy Sheffield APR – Ontario

Carolyn Rickey APR – Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta

Francine Gaudet APR – British Columbia

Accreditation Chairs

Local Society Accreditation Chairs shepherd candidates through the process, helping them to understand it and prepare for it. The mentorship and support they provide is vital.

Vancouver Island - Deirdre Campbell, APR

Vancouver - Penelope Noble, APR

Northern Lights - Kevin E. Brown, APR

Calgary - Del Simon, APR

Edmonton - Colin Babiuk, APR

Saskatoon - Michael Robin, APR

Regina - Robert William Ellis, APR, FCPRS

Manitoba - Terry Aseltine, APR, FCPRS

Toronto - Martin Waxman, APR and Vincent C. Power, APR

Hamilton - Brenda Sweeney, APR

Ottawa - Cindy Goldberg, APR

Quebec - Guy Versailles, ARP

Nova Scotia - Denise Corra, APR

New Brunswick - Robert (Bob) Scott, APR, FCPRS

Newfoundland - Richard Sparkes, APR, FCPRS

PEI - Sheri Ostridge, APR

Exam Development

The exam development team works with the Chief Examiner to develop the questions and answer guidelines for the written and oral exams. Their expertise is invaluable.

Celia Sollows APR, Team Lead (Edmonton)

Andrea Collins APR, FCPRS (Edmonton)

Jean-Pierre Trudel ARP (Québec)

Lydia Boyko APR (Toronto)

Elizabeth Hirst ARP, FSCR (Québec)

David Rowney APR (Hamilton)

Graders

Graders evaluate the work samples, and written and oral exams using established guidelines and standards. Their contribution is fundamental to the program.

Robin Alford APR, FCPRS
Cindy Bickerton APR
Neil Bousquet APR
Don Boynton APR
Pauline Buck APR
Maureen Cameron APR
Carleen Carroll APR
John Challinor II APR
Lorie Chortyk APR
Douglas Christensen APR
Andrea Collins APR, FCPRS
Karen Cook Boas APR
Arlette Côté ARP
Dave Ealey APR
Robert William Ellis APR, FCPRS
Veronica Feihl APR
Deb Folka APR
Francine Gaudet APR
Dianne George APR
Allison Gillan APR
Stephen Heckbert APR
Nico Human APR
Grant Kaiser APR
Sue LeBreton APR

Melanie Lee Lockhart APR
Silvie Letendre ARP
Guy Litalien ARP
Eileen MacIsaac APR
Kathleen Malley APR
MaryJane Martin APR
David McAsey APR, FCPRS (H)
Peter McCarthy APR
Lynn McGregor APR
Philip Mulder APR
Carol Panasiuk APR
France Poulin ARP
Carolyn Rickey APR
David Rowney APR
Nancy Saul-Demers APR
Carla Shore APR
Richard Sparkes APR, FCPRS
Sandra Thornton APR
Amy Thurlow APR
Eileen Tobey APR, FCPRS
Jean Pierre Trudel ARP
Geraldine Vance APR
Monique Vezina APR
Ed Wright APR

National Office

Staff in the National Office, particularly Larisa Morton and Karen Dalton APR, provide on-going administration and management of the program and the much-needed interface with candidates. They make a significant contribution, and provide greatly appreciated support to Council and all of the program's volunteers.

Conclusion

My most sincere thanks to all the people involved in supporting CPRS' accreditation program. Your contributions are immeasurable. It has been my pleasure to serve as the Presiding Officer of Council, and I look forward to seeing the continued growth, development and participation in the program and recognition of the APR designation.

Respectfully submitted,

