

The Presbytery of Central Nebraska overtures the 223rd General Assembly to add to G.211 Certified Church Service the following:

G. 2.1104 Administrative Personnel Association (APA)

Administrative Personnel Association (APA) certified persons have been called to service within particular churches, governing bodies, and church-related entities. These individuals endeavor to reflect their faith through their work and to strengthen the church through their dedication with the purpose to improve the quality of professionalism and to affirm the ministry of the lay church professional.

Members of the Administrative Personnel Association (APA) include secretaries, administrative assistants, bookkeepers, and support staff in church-related settings.

Certification is overseen and granted by the Administrative Personnel Association; the requirements for certification are reported to the appropriate body of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. A formal liaison relationship will be developed between the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Administrative Personnel Association.

a. Skills and Training

Certified Administrative Personnel Assistants are persons certified and called to service in the ministry of church administration in congregations and councils. They shall have skills and training in church polity, church history, reformed theology, spiritual growth and discipline, office administration, Directory for Worship, Book of Confessions, General Assembly Entities and other areas of professional development beneficial to the church.

b. Councils Responsibility

The presbytery shall affirm the skill and dedication of these certified persons by providing for recognition at presbytery at the time of their certification and by inviting certified employees to presbytery meetings, granting them the privilege of the floor with voice only at all presbytery meetings, and in the case of Certified APA members who are ruling elders, the privilege of voice and vote at all its meetings.

Names of those who have earned certification through APA shall be transmitted to the Presbyterian Mission Agency, which will forward them to the Office of the General Assembly and to the Stated Clerk of the presbyteries in which those persons labor.

RATIONALE

A request from twelve women attending a business administration course at the Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, VA laid the groundwork for a professional organization to be created. In 1976 the Administrative Personnel Association was founded by Joyce Bauer and in almost 42 years APA has expanded to 8 regions which include all 50 states with a membership of 254 representing churches of all sizes, including those denominations we are with communion, presbyteries, synods, and the different agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

APA defines its active members as all persons engaged in administrative work in any local church or church-related institution, governing body or agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), or those denominations with which we have communion.

APA is ruled by the body but leads by the Executive Board and Council. Our Executive Board is made up of elected officials to include the president, president-elect, immediate past-president, certification chair, membership chair, secretary, and treasurer. The Council is composed of the following: The National Executive Board, all Regional Presidents, and National Conference Planning Chair.

The mission of APA is to offer the opportunity for professional development and personal growth for those called by God to serve as support staff of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and those denominations we are with communion. The mission is accomplished by providing continuing education events for certification, and occasions for fellowship, worship and spiritual nurture and prayer at both National and Regional meetings, as well as, APA sponsored training events.

We offer three levels of certification with the opportunity to receive recognition for every 50 hours of continuing education beyond level 3. Our members may also receive an additional certificate in Concentrated Studies in Polity, Communications, Administration and Facilities Management, Theology, Church History, and Finance after completing another 25 hours in each of these areas of studies. Approved instructors are required to teach the requested amount of time for the class. Approval is given by our Certification Chair. The Council on Accreditation and Standards reviews the levels to ensure the classes being taught are current with what is happening in the church and office administration. Elective hours include conflict management, designing for communication, technology classes, financial matters, and other classes that provide professional growth and understanding of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Below explains the breakdown for each level.

LEVEL I Core Courses

Church History (Part 1)	2.5 hours
Church History (Part 2)	2.5 hours
Polity 1 (Part 1)	2.5 hours
Polity 1 (Part 2)	2.5 hours
Office Administration	2.5 hours
Spiritual Growth and Discipline	2.5 hours
Theology – Christian Perspectives of the Church (Part 1)	2.5 hours
Theology (Part 2)	2.5 hours
Total Core Hours	20 hours
Total Elective Hours	20 hours
Total Hours Required	40 hours

LEVEL II Core Courses

Directory for Worship	2.5 hours
Legal Matters	2.5 hours
PC(USA) History Since Reunion (Part 1)	2.5 hours
PC(USA) History Since Reunion (Part 2)	2.5 hours

Polity II	2.5 hours
Office Administration	2.5 hours
Spiritual Growth and Discipline	2.5 hours
Total Core Hours	17.5 hours
Total Elective Hours	27.5 hours
Total Hours Required	45 hours

LEVEL III Core Courses

Book of Confessions	2.5 hours
GA Entities	2.5 hours
Polity III	2.5 hours
Office Administration	2.5 hours
Spiritual Growth and Discipline	2.5 hours
Total Core Hours	12.5 hours
Total Elective Hours	37.5 hours
Total Hours Required	50 hours

The current reading of the Book of Order is too vague and places us in a category of “other”. Before the changes made to the form of government, APA had been recognized previously by General Assembly, and under the former section G- 14.0740 we had been affiliated with the Office of Vocation and had a PCUSA staff liaison. We had also been listed in the directory and Book II. However, after NFOG was approved, we were lost in translation and had struggled since to be specifically identified by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for our service and dedication to the larger church.

The Administrative Personnel Association continues to struggle with being identified as a Presbyterian Church U.S.A. organization because there is no defined line connecting us to the larger church. Even though we are currently recognized as a certified body by the larger church, it still does not identify that we are PCUSA. As a result, this continues to put into question the status of our 501c3 status.

The lack of support and recognition from our leaders within the larger church that do not know or choose not to recognize our existence has also impacted the long lasting relationship between APA and the PCUSA church.

Therefore, we ask that after 42 years of service to the church that we are again specifically named and recognized in the Book of Order for our support and commitment to belonging to the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.