Directors on the PRSA board serve in a number of roles, including that of “liaison” to various PRSA committees, boards, task forces, councils, chapters and other groups such as Professional Interest Sections. (For further information on the role of Committees, see separate text in PRSA P&P.)

**Role.** Board liaisons serve as independent and neutral communication channels and arbiters between the PRSA board of directors and the group to which they serve as liaison. The role of the liaison is not to direct the day-to-day work of the committee or to dictate the group’s working agenda, but to accurately represent both:

- The interests and positions of the group to the board; and,
- The interests and positions of the board to the group.

A liaison may become an active supporter of the group, but is not obligated to be an advocate for all of the group’s positions or petitions. In case of conflicting points of view regarding policy and programs, liaisons may argue in favor of whatever position they feel best serves the overall interest of the PRSA membership, but once matters are decided by the PRSA board a liaison must support and implement the board’s decision.

**Responsibilities.**

Generally, a liaison is not required to attend or be present at group meetings, but will establish a system, such as conference calls or email, to stay informed about and communicate with the group and the assigned staff liaison. If liaisons find that they cannot stay in touch with their group, or must miss a crucial call, they should contact a member of the PRSA Executive Committee to find a substitute. Specific exceptions include the UAB, PRSSA, and PRSA Foundation, as noted below, where in-person attendance is expected.

The liaison will provide assistance to a group seeking to make a written or oral presentation to the board.

Liaisons may not serve as officers or members of the groups to which they are assigned.

**Annual Plan and Process.**

**Appointments**

Each Fall, PRSA’s Chair-Elect will start the process of making board liaison assignments for the following year. Ideally, he/she will discuss those assignments with members of the corresponding board to take into account, to the extent possible, board members’ interests and preferences and are finalized when all liaisons have accepted their assignments.
Introductions

In the beginning of the year, board liaisons should contact the Chair or other designated leader of the group which they serve as liaison to (a) introduce themselves, (b) request, review and approve a copy of his/her community's annual plan and (c) agree upon a modus operandi for the liaison to stay apprised of the group's work. *(Staff will provide contact information for group leaders.)* In most cases groups may have reports from prior years, as well as mission statements that can help provide context.

Ongoing Monitoring and Reporting

Although there may be variations from year-to-year, groups are asked to provide written reports, using a standard template to the PRSA Board of Directors quarterly, starting with the second quarter, to be delivered prior to the corresponding in-person board meeting. These reports are circulated to the full PRSA board of directors after they are submitted, but the liaison has the primary responsibility (a) to read these reports and specifically bring to the attention of the PRSA board any exceptional matters of which they should be made aware of, (b) highlight any matter requiring board action, and (c) advise the group of any course corrections or input from the board regarding their activities.

Questions for the liaison to keep in mind in assessing the group’s work:

- Are the group’s plans and activities connected to the PRSA strategic plan?
- How is the group measuring the impact of its activities?
- Has the group planned activities that have budget implications?
- Are there any policy matters, successes, or challenges that should be brought to the attention of the PRSA board?

Given the many groups that make up PRSA, it is especially important for liaisons to keep in mind whether or not the group’s activities need to be coordinated with other PRSA groups.

The Staff Liaison

The staff liaison’s role is to provide logistical support and project management for the work of a group, to advise the group to ensure their activities meet PRSA’s strategic goals, and to ensure that the group complies with PRSA policies and procedures.

In terms of policy, staff liaisons provide guidance with respect to general operating procedures, PRSA’s strategic plan and priorities, and coordination with other groups and activities, both to avoid conflicts and to coordinate opportunities, and PRSA resources, including resource limitations. Staff liaisons will assist with scheduling and arranging meetings, and arranging conference calls. In addition, the staff liaison serves as a substantive resource, to provide counsel with respect to the group’s activities. Finally, the staff liaison provides continuity by keeping the “institutional memory” in terms of the groups’ records.
In terms of administrative support, the role of staff liaison is to help the group take advantage of PRSA resources by making administrative changes to the PRSA web site (for example, updating contact information), keeping the group leader apprised of key dates over the course of the year (due dates for submission of reports to the board, or submission of budget requests), assisting the group with outreach to other PRSA groups to coordinate activities.

Note that substantive materials relating to the mission of the group, even if posted on the web, reports to the board, and other work product from the group are the responsibility of the group leader.

**Liaison Responsibilities - Chapters**

Board members serve as chapter liaisons, and in this role are requested to periodically contact chapter officers by telephone. PRSA staff will allocate chapters among board members, provide contact information, and prepare talking points for board members, who are requested to periodically telephone chapter leaders as discussed during regular PRSA board meetings.

*March 5, 2013*