



## REALTOR® INSTITUTE POLICY STATEMENT

### PURPOSE

The REALTOR® institute is a national program of real estate instruction administered by State REALTOR® Associations whose course of study meets the accreditation standards established by the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR).

The program is designed primarily for members for whom residential real estate is their main business activity. The course of study helps members increase their knowledge and skills in a broad array of develop important business contacts.

In accordance with the terms and conditions of an agreement entered into with the National Association of REALTORS®, accredited State Associations may offer the program and grant to qualified individuals the designation GRI. Any person awarded the GRI designation must be a member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and must maintain that membership to retain the designation. The GRI designation symbolizes not only completion of a course of study required by the program but also the commitment to apply that knowledge consistent with the Code of Ethics.

### OVERVIEW

The REALTOR® Institute curriculum represents the minimum common body of knowledge for progressive real estate professional as defined by the Professional Development Committee of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS(S). NAR recommends that the REALTOR® Institute program be completed in no more than five (5) years of starting the program.

The program consists of a minimum of 60 hours of instruction if delivered in a classroom format. To achieve full credit and hours for a course, the member needs to be present for the entire duration of the class. Failure to do so will result as an incompleting of the course, no hours earned, and the member would have to complete the entire course at its next availability. Alternative delivery methods, e.g., satellite TV, Internet, etc., may lessen or increase instruction time. Time for administering examinations is not included in the 60 hour minimum. State Associations may choose to require more than 60 hours of instruction and may offer the REALTOR® Institute in a variety of formats. Course credit by examination or experience in business, in lieu of course work, is permitted at the discretion of the State Association.

The Accreditation Guideline assists State Associations in meeting NAR's requirements for accreditation. State Associations are provided a copy of the REALTOR® Institute Accreditation Guidelines and the REALTOR® Institute Policy at the time accreditation is required.

### THE CURRICULUM

#### A. REQUIRED

Each state has the option to adopt the curriculum standards from NAR, based upon a set of required core

competencies, suggested topics, and expected student learning outcomes; or develop a customized curriculum that meets the needs of its market and subject to review by NAR and the review panel during the accreditation process. State Associations must develop specific, measurable learning objectives to correlate with their respective program's curriculum. Any course or Module examinations should include test items that correspond to the required instructional objectives. Each state association shall determine the required aspects of its REALTOR® Institute program based upon that state's licensing and continuing education laws, coursework that students will have already completed prior to enrollment, the educational marketplace in that state, and the demographic profile of its typical students.

## **B. ELECTIVE**

The elective curriculum is determined by State Associations subject to review by the review panel via an online review, during the accreditation process. As with the state's required curriculum, the elective curriculum should be organized around instructional objectives and examinations should include test items for these objectives. State Associations may develop their elective outlines independently or they may obtain assistance from NAR or external provider.

Note: The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® will act as a clearinghouse for instructional outlines/objectives and examinations. During each accreditation period, State Associations will indicate what information (curriculum, objectives, examinations, etc.) may be entered into the GRI Clearinghouse. State Association education staff has access to the GRI Clearinghouse.

## **ACCREDITATION**

Accreditation is an ongoing process of constructive consultation involving the Chair and Vice Chair of the State Education Directors, a member from the Professional Development Committee, and one NAR staff member. The purpose of accreditation is to help each state association, with NAR's assistance, maintain a quality program that continually meets the demands and challenges of the ever-changing real estate profession. State Associations must be accredited as providers of the REALTOR® Institute program every three (3) years.

The following information will be asked during the online accreditation review:

1. Information about the duration of the program
2. Delivery method (e.g. live classroom, online/distance, simulcast instruction)
3. A brief description of each topic or module and approximate time devoted to each.
4. Learning objectives that address the specific topics, modules, or courses as part of the state's REQUIRED curriculum. Objectives should be organized by (or keyed to) each topic in the curriculum standards.
5. Learning objectives that address specific topics, modules or courses as part of the state's ELECTIVE curriculum. Objectives should be organized by (or keyed to) the topics or modules that are part of the elective program.

6. Information about the state's REALTOR® Institute's quality assurance program for curriculum, instructors, and customer satisfaction, as well as any concerns or requests for assistance that would help the state association improve the marketability of its REALTOR® Institute program.
7. A summary of recent enrollments in and/or graduations from the state's GRI program.

Accreditation is awarded based on the recommendations of an accreditation review panel comprised of the Chair and Vice Chair of the State Education Directors, a member from the Professional Development Committee, and one NAR staff member. The review panel may choose to provisionally accredit a provider, contingent on the state making improvements to their GRI program within a prescribed amount of time. Full accreditation is awarded for a three-year term. Failure to be accredited may result in the NAR Board of Directors revoking a state's right to deliver the REALTOR® Institute program and award the GRI designation. Failure to be accredited will have no impact on the designation status of members previously awarded the GRI from the state.

If a state association makes a substantial change to its curriculum or program between accreditations, it will submit its curriculum changes to NAR staff for their information and review.

Annual accreditation review periods are from January 1 – December 31. Specific deadlines will be included in the Accreditation Guidelines distributed annually to states being reviewed for accreditation.

### **NATIONAL PROGRAM FUNDING**

The REALTOR® Institute program is considered a fee-for-service program and, therefore must be funded through means other than dues dollars. A \$15 per new GRI designee fee is to be collected by State Associations and forwarded to NAR on a quarterly basis, during the 2017-2018 years, and will increase to \$20 starting 2019 and beyond.

### **GRI RECOGNITION**

GRI is a nationally recognized designation. It is important that the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® provides its members throughout the country with a REALTOR® Institute course of study that is recognizably similar from state to state. Only with a degree of standardization is this possible.

Individuals who have received the GRI designation from one State Association must be granted recognition by every other State Association.

### **EQUIVALENCY**

In cases where individuals take GRI courses out of state, State Associations must review the individuals GRI course records or course curriculum on a case-by-case basis to determine what part of the GRI program is transferable. State Associations may assess a reasonable fee for this service.

State Associations shall establish equivalency agreements with other state associations for the purpose of granting GRI credits, which equivalency credits cannot be unreasonably denied. A state association whose



program has been denied equivalency may request review pursuant to the Procedures for Consideration of Alleged Violations of the REALTOR® Institute Policies to determine whether the denial was unreasonable.

### **GRI CHALLENGE EXAMINATIONS**

If a State Association offers a GRI Challenge Examination so that GRI course credit may be earned in lieu of taking a GRI course, the Challenge Examination must be equivalent in difficulty and content to any used in the regular REALTOR® Institute program.

### **DESIGNATION**

"Graduate, REALTOR® Institute" (GRI) is the designation awarded by State Associations to their members who successfully complete the full course of study and examinations (or equivalency examinations) which meet the minimum requirements for such a course of study as established by the Professional Development Committee of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and approved by the Board of Directors of the National Association. In those cases where a conflict of State Association requirements arise, NAR retains the right to confer the GRI designation to students who can substantiate that they have met the NAR established criteria.

The REALTOR® Institute program, including the designation "GRI", was created and is owned exclusively by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®. Because the National Association believes that the professional education contained in the REALTOR® Institute program is a task that is most appropriately performed on a state basis, it has elected to operate the REALTOR® Institute by establishing minimum requirements to be adopted by State Associations wishing to participate in the program. When the National Association is satisfied that a given State Association does comply with established requirements, the State Association will be advised that their participation in the program is approved and that they are authorized to award the right to use the "GRI" designation to members who successfully complete the program.

(NOTES: (1) It is essential that the comma always appear between the words "Graduate" and "REALTOR® Institute" as follows: "Graduate, REALTOR® Institute", with the exception of the "GRI" logo and (2) that the program is called REALTOR® Institute rather than REALTORS® Institute.)

### **CO-SPONSORING**

State Associations may co-sponsor the REALTOR® Institute program with other organizations as long as the State Associations retains ultimate responsibility for and control of the program, the curriculum and the designation\*. The program, as offered, must conform to all requirements in the REALTOR® Institute Policy Statement. State Associations that do not have a GRI program must provide options for members including taking courses in another state or co-sponsoring with another State or Local Association.

\*If a State Association abdicates all involvement with GRI, a Local Association can be allowed to take over the GRI program. The agreement must be in writing, submitted to NAR, and will be effective for term of State's accreditation.

### **CERTIFICATE**

REALTORS® and REALTOR-ASSOCIATES® who successfully complete examinations and/or the full course of study as established by the Board of Directors of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® are eligible to receive certificates.



The design of the certificates to be awarded is left to the discretion of the State Association; however, it must comply with the standards established for use of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® registered trademarks.

The recipient shall use this Certificate only as evidence of successful completion of a prescribed and approved course of study and/or an examination thereon. Any other use, or uses, shall be considered a misuse and warrant recall of the Certificate by the State Association.

### **INSIGNIA**

If the insignia used by the State Association in connection with this program includes the REALTOR® logo of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (the block "R"), it shall conform to the policies established for such use by the National Association. Alternatively, the insignia used by the State Association may be sufficiently different so as not to resemble the REALTOR® logo of the National Association.

### **PROMOTION AND PUBLICITY**

NAR will direct its promotion efforts to assisting State Associations. NAR will offer to State Associations statistical information for inclusion in state GRI marketing and promotion plans. Marketing and course announcements must include a statement regarding which states have approved this course for GRI credit.

### **GRI PINS**

State Associations should award pins or allow GRI designees to purchase pins upon completion of the program. Pins must be purchased through a licensed provider.

### **CHANGES TO THE GRI CURRICULUM**

From state to state, the student market for the GRI program has evolved very differently since its inception. Each state association, therefore, shall have the option of: (a) adopting the set of required curriculum topics set forth by NAR in its curriculum benchmarks, and delivering instruction in every topic that is not addressed by a prerequisite course taken in that state; or (b) developing a customized GRI curriculum that meets the needs of its particular student market, documenting its curriculum development process for NAR. If a state association exercises the latter option, that association shall provide a detailed description of its curriculum development process to the NAR Business Specialties Department as part of its periodic review for accreditation, as well as a demographic profile of its student market. Feedback from a variety of sources will be encouraged for any state association developing and adopting a customized curriculum. The Professional Development Committee has oversight of the GRI designation and the accreditation process.

### **NAR'S ROLE IN COURSE DEVELOPMENT**

NAR's role in GRI curriculum development is primarily that of a clearinghouse resource. There may be certain circumstances, after conducting the proper research, that GRI courses or course components would be developed by NAR. Moreover, NAR products should be developed in such a way that states could adapt them for inclusion in their GRI courses. NAR's, the Institutes', and State and Local Association's products and courses can also be utilized in a GRI program, and subject to the discretion of each State Association.

## **GRI CHAPTERS**

NAR will serve as a clearinghouse and catalyst to assist State Associations wishing to establish GRI chapters. Sample by-laws, operating manuals and other materials will be collected and made available via established clearinghouse distribution channels. NAR will serve as a consultant to those states wishing to establish GRI chapters.

## **GRADUATE GRI COURSES**

NAR will serve a clearinghouse role for States Associations wishing to establish GRI Graduate programs designed for members who have already received the GRI designation. NAR will collect information from states that have implemented such programs and provide opportunities for states to exchange this information.

## **PROCEDURES FOR CONSIDERATION OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF REALTOR® INSTITUTE POLICY**

Alleged violations of the REALTOR® Institute Policy will be received and reviewed by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Professional Development Committee in consultation with staff and counsel. A written response will be requested from any state association so charged. Staff and counsel will then attempt to provide technical and procedural assistance to the association cited in the complaint when deemed appropriate by the Chair and Vice Chair. Where the efforts of the Committee leadership and staff are unsuccessful, the alleged violation of the REALTOR® Institute Policy will be considered by a special hearing panel of five members of the Professional Development Committee selected by the Chair, that will meet at one of the regularly scheduled meetings of the National Association or, where deemed necessary by the president, at a special meeting called for the purpose. Any challenge to the qualifications of a panel member shall be decided by the Chair. The burden shall be on the complainant to show that the state association has violated the REALTOR® Institute Policy.

Both the complainant and respondent may submit supporting documentation of no more than 100 pages in support of the alleged violation or in support of the state association's response to the charge. Such materials must be received by the National Association no later than 30 days prior to the date of the hearing and will be provided to the members of the hearing panel prior to the hearing.

Both the complainant and the respondent may be represented by counsel at the hearing. The procedures to be followed at the hearing will parallel, as closely as possible, those established in the *Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual* for the conduct of an ethics hearing, in effect at the time the complainant is received by the National Association. Any variations from the procedures established in the *Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual* will be made at the discretion of the Chair of the Professional Development Committee.

The decision of the hearing panel will be provided to the parties no more than 60 days after the hearing. The decision will be signed by a majority of the hearing panel members or alternatively, will be accompanied by certification from staff that the panel's decision has been reviewed by and is concurred in by a majority of the hearing panel members.

If either the complainant or respondent chooses to appeal the hearing panel's decision, a written request for appeal must be filed with the National Association within 30 days of receipt of the decision by the parties. The request for appeal must specify, in detail, the bases on which the hearing panel's decision is being challenged. Upon receipt of a request for appeal, staff will put the matter on the agenda of the Professional Development Committee at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The appeal hearing will be the final matter of business on the committee's agenda and will be considered in executive session. The party requesting the appeal will have 15 minutes to explain why the decision of the hearing panel should be modified or should not be adopted. The Chair of the hearing panel will then have 15 minutes to respond. Following that, the party requesting the appeal, the Chair of the hearing panel, and the non-appealing party will each have 5 minutes to offer any rebuttal and to make any closing statement. Following this, the parties will be dismissed.

Following the closing statements, the Professional Development Committee will remain in executive session for the purpose of determining whether the hearing panel's decision should be affirmed, modified, or reversed. The decision of the Professional Development Committee will be final and binding and not subject to any further review or appeal with the sole exception that any recommendation that a state association's accreditation to confer the GRI designation be terminated shall be reported to the Board of Directors with the final decision to be made by the directors.

In instances where no appeal is made to the decision of the hearing panel within the allotted 30 days, the decision of the hearing panel will be considered final and binding and not subject to further review or appeal but shall be reported by the Chair of the hearing panel to Professional Development Committee at the next regularly scheduled meeting for information purposes. Any recommendation that a state association's accreditation to confer the GRI designation be terminated shall be reported to the Board of Directors with the final decision to be made by the directors.