



The IRWA Educational Journey

You, too, can get additional State continuing education credits!

BY MAGGIE SCHEDLER, SR/WA, R/W-URAC, R/W-RAC

My right of way career started in 1999 as a temporary administrative assistant in the right of way department for a fiber optics company. In 2002, I moved to a consulting company and began working with a former employee of the fiber optics company, who is now my supervisor with AtkinsRéalis. His name is Steve Bohuslav, and he holds the SR/WA designation. He informed me he was the incoming president for Chapter 74 and encouraged me to join the Programs Committee and start working on my relocation certification.

My first IRWA class was Course 500: The Uniform Act Executive Summary (now Course 105). At the end of the class, everyone was signing a roster for something other than IRWA credits. I realized then that everyone was receiving credits for the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC) and the Texas Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board (TALCB). I thought that was the coolest thing I had ever seen — a BOGO (Buy One Get One) deal for our members, wow!

That first IRWA class made a huge impression on me, and I became intrigued by IRWA's education program and enjoyed seeing all the acquisition agents and appraisers receiving additional continuing education (CE) credits. It was so captivating that I became part of the Education Committee for Chapter 74, constantly inquiring about CEs ensuring TREC/TALCB credits were given to the

respective agencies. Not only were IRWA courses approved, but the annual Eminent Domain (ED) Seminar was also approved for additional credits, which was so exciting. As the years progressed, we continued to secure additional CEs for most IRWA courses and the ED Seminar. However, a trend started to occur, and I became aware that certain classes were not being approved for continuing education credits, and only a handful of classes were actually being approved for CEs.

Upon becoming vice chair of Region 2 in July 2021, I made it my top priority to add additional continuing education courses for the membership. Hopefully, it was this persistence that led to more and more courses being approved again by TREC and the TALCB. As everyone knows, to accomplish this goal, I was greatly helped by others in the Association, including our Region offering to help pay for the CEs for members. It was exciting to see our courses being approved again.





Once the IRWA courses were approved, questions arose as to why other states within our Region did not have the same CEs. It was explained that not all states require a real estate license for acquisition, but every state requires appraisers to have CEs.

Within Region 2, only one state (Texas), requires acquisition or easement and right of way (ERW) agents to hold a real estate/broker license or ERW license. The other three states (Arkansas, Louisiana and Oklahoma) do not have this requirement. From this, a new journey began to allow appraiser CEs approved for the other states within the Region. Today, if a Chapter requests CEs, we work with IRWA HQ to receive the credits since IRWA is an approved provider in each state. Region 2 is an active Region with several Chapters holding ROW seminars. These seminars do get approved for additional CEs for Texas. If requested by other states within the Region, we work to obtain those approvals as well.

On January 1, 2023, TREC began requiring all ERW agents to have Qualifying Education (QE) for either a new license or renewal of a license. Several months prior to January 1, 2023, IRWA HQ and I, as Region vice chair, worked closely with TREC, and we became the first provider that offered QEs for all the ERW agents. IRWA has two courses that an ERW agent can take for QEs, and most of our other courses are approved for ERW CEs.

I would like to give a heartfelt thank you to the HQ staff for all they do for the Chapters and Regions. If not for Amir Vafamanesh, DeOnna Koonce, Irvon Lopez, Jennifer Mendoza, Nathan Cruzado and Francis Vincente, we would not have these courses approved. Without their dedication to the Association, which was integral to the success of the Chapters/Regions, we would not have the ability to get additional CEs. This group of amazing people have made my job much easier and is greatly appreciated.

You can also receive additional state CE credits. Please follow the instructions below to request additional CEs for IRWA Courses:

- Send an email to Amir Vafamanesh and Irvon Lopez letting them know what upcoming course you would like to hold.
- If your state needs approval, Amir and Irvon will work with you to obtain approval.
- If your State already shows IRWA as an approved provider, Irvon will submit the required documentation as well as a check for the approval request for the course.
- Should your Region or Chapter want additional CEs for an upcoming seminar, it will be the Region or Chapter responsibility to pay the agency for review of your documentation. However, Amir and Irvon will work with you on the information needed to submit your documentation. It will be your responsibility to submit and remit payment for this.

We recently learned TREC and TREC-ERW are now approved for Course 100: Principles of Land Acquisition (only) under the IRWA University on-demand courses. Apparently, this is a first for an asynchronous course (a course that does not require a live instructor). Hot Dog!!!!!!!

This process will take time, but it is time well spent for the effort. Please remember: You too can get additional state continuing education credits! 🌟



Maggie Schedler, SR/WA, R/W-URAC, R/W-RAC, is an acquisition and relocation agent with AtkinsRéalis. She has more than 25 years of experience in the right of way field. In addition, Maggie is a past president of Chapter 74 located in Austin, Texas, and was the recipient of the 2010 Chapter 74 Professional of the Year. She currently serves as Region 2 chair.

