

Minutes of the Public Relations Division of the International Communication Association Annual Meeting New Orleans, LA, USA, May 28, 2004, 5:15-6:40 P.M.

I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by chair Sherry Ferguson on May 28, 2004, at 5:15 p.m.

The meeting began with a greeting from ICA Executive Director Michael Haley. He informed members that next year's conference theme would be "Communication: Questioning the Dialogue." Authors will be able to submit papers online from September 15 to November 1, 2004, and they will be notified regarding acceptance by mid-December. Those whose papers are accepted will be able to upload revised papers through April 2005, and registered members will be able to download copies. The 2005 ICA conference will be held at the Sheraton New York. The room rate will be \$150 per night, according to Haley.

Following Haley's greeting, Sherry Ferguson introduced current board members Hochang Shin (Vice Chair) and Betteke van Ruler (Secretary).

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Minutes, San Diego, California, 2003

Copies of the minutes from the 2003 meeting were distributed. All attending members (54) approved the minutes without modification.

B. Election Results

Cindy Christen was introduced as the Secretary-elect for 2004-2006.

C. Activities Review

- 1. Web Site and Listserv.** Diane Witmer was commended for maintaining the Web site promptly. Sherry Ferguson informed members that she receives lists of new members from the ICA on a periodic basis, but she does not receive notice of revised email addresses; so please notify Sherry, as well as the ICA, regarding changes to email addresses. Members can post directly to the listserv, but the postings must be in plain text. Photos can be accessed through links that are provided to members.
- 2. Division Newsletter.** The newsletter is dependent on member news. Please send news in the coming year to Cindy Christen. Personal notes regarding moves, promotions, research projects, etc., are welcome. Please send news in plain text.
- 3. Robert Heath Top Paper Award.** Bonita Dostal Neff, who serves with co-chair Dean Kruckenberg on the awards committee, discussed the establishment of the Robert Heath Top Paper Award. In the period leading to the conference, John Madsen took the lead in developing guidelines for the award. Guidelines specify that the award will be bestowed each year. The recipient of the annual award will be selected from the Top Paper session. Papers will undergo a second judging by three past chairs of the division. The 2004 winner of the Robert Heath Top Paper Award is Betteke van Ruler.
- 4. Co-Sponsored Panels.** At the 2003 business meeting, members expressed interest in more interaction with the Organizational Communication Division. Accordingly, Sherry Ferguson contacted this year's Organizational Communication chair, Noshir Contractor, who expressed an interest in co-sponsored panels. Hochang Shin reported, however, that it was difficult to identify papers from this year's submissions that would fit well on a co-

sponsored panel; and so he did not pursue the idea of a joint session. Suggestions for next year were to add key words to the bottom of abstracts, emphasize key words in the "Call for Papers," and rely on content to determine if a co-sponsored panel is feasible.

D. Report by Program Chair

Program Chair Hochang Shin reported that 71 papers and eight panels had been submitted. Of these, 43 papers and six panels were accepted. Of the 43 papers accepted, 35 were by professors and eight were by students. The acceptance rate for professors was 78 percent, and the acceptance rate for students was 33 percent. Also, seven dissertations and four theses were submitted.

Twelve papers identified the authors by name; members were reminded not to write down their names. Student authors should be clearly identified. Sherry Ferguson observed that the division had thus far separated professor and student papers and asked for comments. Members preferred to leave the policy as is.

E. Career Productivity Award

The Career Productivity Award is an ICA award for which anyone can submit nominations. This year, members from the Public Relations Division nominated James and Larissa Grunig for the award. Numerous people wrote letters in support of the nomination. The Grunigs did not win this year; however, ICA invited the Public Relations Division to resubmit their names next year.

F. Report by Student Representative to ICA

Katerina Tsetsura is one of two student representatives for ICA. This is her second year, and she will be stepping down after this conference. Katerina reported on several issues.

Three-year complementary memberships for selected universities in category B & C countries will include online access to ICA materials. Existing members were encouraged to help to identify appropriate universities and notify Katerina. A reduction in rates for students is a sensitive issue. Proposed rates for students from B & C countries are \$45 (B) and \$35 (C) versus the normal \$60. The possibility of using division funds to support students from B & C countries was mentioned. Katerina acknowledged that the process of nominating student board members is confusing. For example, two European students are interested in serving but are not on the ballot. To ensure your name appears on the ballot, the best alternative is to collect 200 signatures.

G. Acknowledgement of Member Efforts by Chair

Sherry Ferguson acknowledged the 42 members who had reviewed papers, those who had reviewed dissertations/theses, and those who had reviewed papers for the Robert Heath Top Paper Award. Hochang Shin was thanked for the wonderful sessions. Bonita Neff was thanked for her work on the Robert Heath Top Paper Award and for putting together the preconference. Betteke van Ruler was thanked for her efforts on the division newsletter and for her advice and counsel. All reviewers were invited to stand up and received a round of applause.

H. Presentation/Recognition of Awards

The Public Relations Division provided \$300 for awards; this amount was matched by \$300 from ICA.

5. **Student Representative.** The first award went to Katerina Tsetsura, in acknowledgement of her work as ICA student representative.
6. **Top Four Student Papers.** Authors of the top four student papers were acknowledged: Eyun-Jung Ki, University of Florida; Hyunmee Kang, Southern Illinois University; Paul Lieber, Louisiana State University; and MinJung Sung, University of Maryland.
7. **Dissertation/Thesis Competitions.** Shannon Bowen, past winner of the dissertation award, thanked the seven candidates and their faculty advisors. She shared her excitement at having won the dissertation award in the previous competition. Shannon then acknowledged the winner of the dissertation competition for January 2002-January 2004: Jae-Hwa Shin from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Priscilla Murphy accepted the award for best M.A. thesis on behalf of Dawn Gilpin from the University of Memphis. The award was presented by program chair Hochang Shin.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. New York and Other Conferences

The 2005 ICA conference will be held in New York; the 2006 conference in Dresden, Germany; the 2007 conference in San Francisco, California; and the 2008 conference in Montreal, Canada.

B. Membership Numbers

The number of Public Relations Division members is down to 270. However, this downward trend characterizes all ICA divisions at this time of year. Membership numbers tend to peak in October. By October 2003, for example, division numbers had climbed to 319 members.

C. Nomination of Vice Chair/Program Chair for 2005-2007

The PR division must elect a new Vice-Chair to replace Hochang Shin in September 2004, at which time he moves into the Chair's position. The position of Vice-Chair involves a six-year commitment. The Vice Chair is in charge of the conference program for two years, after which the person serves as Chair for two years and then Past Chair for two years.

The three-person nominating committee is headed by Bonita Neff. Sherry Ferguson also asked Gail Walker and Lynn Zoch to serve on the committee. The committee needs to arrive at two nominations for Vice Chair.

Bonita Neff led the Public Relations Division in nominations. She described the duties of the position, which include quick turnaround on tasks, meeting deadlines, becoming familiar with technological aspects of the submission and review process, writing newsletter articles, and attending two meetings each year: NCA at the midpoint and ICA. (Bonita pointed out that past chairs could substitute for the Vice Chair at the NCA meeting.) As Past Chair, the person would be responsible for handling the pre-conference.

All elections will be handled online as of September. Bonita then solicited nominations from the floor for the position of Vice Chair. Priscilla Murphy was nominated and accepted the nomination. Juan Carlos Molleda was nominated but declined. Betteke van Ruler was nominated and accepted. A motion to close nominations was then passed. In response to a question from the floor, Bonita confirmed that the committee would be open to more nominations. Nominations must be submitted to ICA by July 1. Members were invited to contact Bonita directly with any additional nominations.

D. ICA Annual Board Meeting Topics

Sherry Ferguson provided a summary of discussions that took place at the ICA board meeting. As of May, ICA has exceeded its objective for number of members. The income stream is good. Publication income is on target (\$50,000 in the black). Anticipated conference expenses are on target.

Blackwell has submitted a proposal to ICA to publish a series of books on Communication in the Public Interest. Blackwell also proposed a second project, which would entail publishing an encyclopedia of communication (or International encyclopedia of communication). The negotiations with Blackwell are ongoing. No contract has yet been signed.

The creation of a Journalism Interest Group, for which some signed a petition, has been approved. The ICA is presently examining questions arising from the proliferation of divisions and possible overlapping of interest areas. The Mass Communication Division is undertaking a self-examination. A sociogram, distributed at the ICA board meeting, showed that many Public Relations Division members are also affiliated with the Organizational Communication, Health Communication, and Political Communication divisions.

Approximately 1,800 members registered for the ICA New Orleans conference, slightly below those who attended the San Diego conference. Time slots were assigned on the basis of number of papers submitted versus historical tradition. LCD projectors cost \$600 per day per room, and so the number of LCDs was limited. It was pointed out, however, that bringing your own LCD is not acceptable. This will be particularly true at next year's conference in New York. ICA will be fined \$600 a day should this occur. It is important that all submitters of papers to next year's conference enter as co-presenter, as well as co-author, to avoid time conflicts at next year's conference.

Members interested in being theme session reviewers for the 2005 conference should contact Sherry Ferguson. The 2006 ICA conference in Dresden will take place on June 19-26, 2006. Members are encouraged to reserve hotel rooms and flights early to avoid possible conflicts with the World Cup soccer tournament.

A Code of Ethics will be submitted to the ICA board next year. A proposal by Bill Benoit would have ICA become more pragmatically involved in counseling governments regarding democratic practices in national elections. Visual Communication has moved from an interest group to a division.

E. Division Involvement in ICA Press Releases

Bob Cox raised the tentative idea that the Public Relations Division write press releases publicizing the research efforts of its members for distribution on national radio networks. Sherry Ferguson expressed concern regarding the practical nature of the task and also felt that some sort of incentive would be necessary to make it worth the while of members to contribute in this way to the association. Shannon Bowen concurred that that this kind of involvement could contribute to stereotyping of public relations academics.

F. Ad Hoc Committees

The Public Relations Division has a strategic plan that appears to be up to date. The plan needs to be implemented, however. Sherry Ferguson has contacted some members about serving on one of two ad hoc committees that will investigate internationalization of the division and cross-university/cross-country endeavors, respectively. Ad hoc committees will determine how to approach their respective tasks. One idea from the floor was to set up a time and place for each committee to meet. Committee volunteers agreed to meet following the business meeting.

G. Reception

Members were invited to attend the wine and cheese reception that followed the business meeting.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

**Submitted by Cindy Christen
Secretary of the PR Division**