Minutes of the
PUBLIC RELATIONS DIVISION ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

International Communication Association
Dresden, Germany
June 22, 2006, 4:30-6:00 p.m.

I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by division chair Hochang Shin on June 22, 2006, at 4:30 p.m. Shin introduced vice chair Betteke van Ruler and secretary Cindy Christen (secretary).

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Minutes, New York City, NY, 2005

Copies of the minutes from the 2005 meeting were distributed. All attending members (40) approved the minutes without modification.

B. Election Results

Juan Carlos Molleda was introduced as the secretary-elect for 2006-2008.

C. Activities Review by Chair, with Subreports by Committees or Individuals

1. Cross-national Research Committee. Last year's minutes include a timeline for this committee. Craig Carroll reported that a steering committee consisting of Carroll, Krishnamurthy Sriramesh (vice chair for Asia) and Betteke van Ruler (vice chair for Europe) met at last year's ICA conference. Among the projects considered was an evaluation of United Nations messages in press releases and news coverage in 20 countries. However, the September 22 deadline passed with no proposals submitted. The project was therefore reorganized and will proceed if proposals are submitted by individuals.

Public Relations is the most international of ICA divisions, with panelists representing 15 countries and 10 cross-national research papers. Examples include next-generation excellence theory and international public relations ethics. Carroll thanked past-chair Sherry Ferguson for initiating the cross-national effort. The next step, according to Carroll, is enlisting more international members to serve as panel respondents. Adding website links to cross-national initiatives was also suggested. Please e-mail Carroll if you are interested in participating in cross-national efforts.

Betteke van Ruler added that she had been asked to discuss possible trans-divisional activities to promote cross-national research.

2. Division Membership Numbers. Hochang Shin announced that the Public Relations Division had 326 members (as compared to 289 members prior to last year's conference), an increase of approximately 10 percent. Shin extended a welcome to new members from Germany.

3. ICA Fellow Nomination. The Public Relations Division nominated Robert Heath as an ICA fellow. Ten prominent members total were nominated, and five fellows were chosen:

   a. Jennings Bryant (Department of Telecommunication & Film, University of Alabama)
   b. John A. Daly (Department of Communication, University of Texas-Austin)
   c. Larry Gross (Annenberg School of Communication, University of Southern California)
   d. Annie Lang (Department of Telecommunications, Indiana University)
   e. James Taylor (Department of Communication, University of Montreal in Canada)

Competition chair Bey-Ling Sha reported that change was in progress. The process involves a double blind review. Competition reviewers review 40-page manuscripts rather than entire theses or dissertations. Sha thanked reviewers Vince Hazelton, Bonita Neff and Anna Tkalevcherchek. Ten entries were submitted for the dissertation competition, and three for the thesis competition.

5. **News on New Journals and Yearbooks.** The *Journal of Strategic Communication*, edited by Derina Holtzhausen and Kirk Hallahan, is scheduled to begin publishing in January 2007. Elizabeth Toth reported that the journal *Best Practices in Public Relations and Communication Management* was on hold. Both international and American practices will eventually be featured.

6. **Announcement of Samsung Sponsorship.** Samsung, a leading Korean company, will sponsor the Public Relations Division in the amount of $10,000; $5,000 per year for two years, 2006 and 2007. Three-fifths of the fund ($6,000) will be used for public relations dinners during the 2006 and 2007 conferences, and two-fifths ($4,000) will be used as monetary awards for James E. Grunig and Larissa A. Grunig Top Thesis and Dissertation winners. Since the competition is held every two years, and $300 and $500 will be given to top thesis and dissertation winners, respectively, these monetary awards are expected to last for at least 10 years.

7. **Announcement of Plank Center Award.** The Plank Center for Public Relations Studies at the University of Alabama recognizes teaching, research, service and professional practice. Betsy Plank was a 1944 University of Alabama graduate and went on to a distinguished career in corporate and agency public relations. She is known as "The First Lady of Public Relations" in the United States. At 85, Plank is still active and has two passions: public relations education and students. The Plank Center is going to award $500 for the ICA top student paper in public relations.

8. **Website and Listserv.** Hochang Shin acknowledged Sung-Un Yang for his excellent work maintaining the Public Relations Division website and listserv.

9. **Research Proposals to KPRA.** To encourage research activities in the public relations field and to contribute to academic improvement, the Korean Public Relations Association (KPRA) invites public relations scholars to apply for the KPRA 2006 research fund by submitting research proposals. Last year, 30 proposals were submitted and 10 were funded (all submitted by Korean scholars or Korean students studying in the United States). This year, however, one of two research funds ($6,200 U.S. each) will be given to a non-Korean scholar. Those who applied previously are encouraged to try again. For more information, please see the call for research proposals posted on the ICA PR Division website (www.icapr.org) or contact Hochang Shin at hochang@sogang.ac.kr.

D. Report by Program Chair

1. **Competitive Paper and Panel Submissions.** Program chair Betteke van Ruler reported that 90 papers and 12 panel proposals had been submitted to the Public Relations Division. Of these, 75 percent of papers and five panels were accepted. van Ruler thanked reviewers, acknowledging the magnitude and time-consuming nature of the task. She also noted that all reviews had been submitted on time. van Ruler hopes that even more papers will be submitted next year and said that more reviewers will be needed. She will be contacting division members in September and hopes that members will agree to serve as reviewers.

2. **Comments on Process.** ICA asks that student papers be clearly identified as such. ICA is encouraging student submissions and wants to ensure that student papers receive the appropriate review.

In a number of Dresden sessions, one or two individuals scheduled to present did not show up. Those members attending the business meeting were encouraged to tell others that if they submit papers for presentation, they must be able to attend the conference. Some may encounter visa issues, but if travel plans are initiated early they should be able to attend.

van Ruler is already working on the next conference. She is involved in the development of a preconference session on how to conduct cross-national research. She also hopes to develop a joint preconference session with the Organizational Communication Division and reports that Organizational Communication is very enthusiastic about doing this in 2008. In addition, van Ruler is working on the chair’s panel, which is currently in the discussion stage.

E. Acknowledgement of Member Efforts by Chair
Hochang Shin deemed the Dresden program “fantastic” and thanked Guenter Bentele for his efforts. Cindy Christen was thanked for writing public relations entries for the ICA newsletter on behalf of Shin. Elizabeth Toth was thanked for coordinating the Robert Heath Top Paper Award. Bey-Ling Sha was thanked for coordinating the Grunig & Grunig thesis/dissertation competition. Shin also thanked past chair Sherry Ferguson.

Shin praised the Tuesday reception, organized in cooperation with the Public Relations and Organizational Communication Division of the German Communication Association (DGPuK). The reception was organized by Betteke van Ruler and sponsored by Bertelsmann Foundation. Wednesday’s wine tasting tour was sponsored by Stroeer (www.stroeer.de), the number 1 company in Germany and Poland for out of home media, thanks to Guenter Bentele. Shin praised the tour’s wonderful hostess along with the food and wine enjoyed by division members. Shin concluded by thanking Betteke van Ruler for a solid 2006 conference program.

Bonita Neff noted that Public Relations Division sessions at the Dresden conference were well attended, with sessions attracting between 28 and 74 attendees (for an average of 52 members per session). Moreover, members tended to stay for the entire session. This is a large number relative to other divisions, and Carl Botan encouraged the division to fight for larger rooms and more convenient session times at future conferences.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. San Francisco and Other Conferences

ICA Executive Director Michael Haley announced that the 2007 ICA conference would be held in San Francisco, California. The conference will be held May 23-27, 2007. The conference theme will be “Creating Communication: Content, Control, Critique.” The emphasis will be on new and exciting ways to communicate and interact. Public relations has a lot to offer on this topic. The keynote speaker has yet to be determined, but several are being considered. Among the possibilities is the CEO of Google, who could address such issues as censorship in China.

The conference will be held at the Hilton Hotel. The room rate will be $125 a night. The need to do something about student housing was acknowledged; the best option for now may be for students to share a room, which will reduce cost to the $60 range. Each session room will have overhead and LCD projectors (but not slide projectors or VCRs). It is undecided if laptops will be provided along with LCD projectors, as laptops are difficult to ship and tend to “walk away”.

Haley anticipates that the size of the San Francisco conference will be larger than Dresden but not as large as New York. Betteke van Ruler noted that the Public Relations Division had been allocated 19 session slots for Dresden, and Haley indicated that the division would likely get one more back for San Francisco.

A member noted that the ICA conference would coincide with Memorial Day and raised the possibility of moving the conference to a different time of year. Haley indicated that contracts were signed through 2009 but that this possibility could be examined thereafter. One factor is price; rates tend to be lower over Memorial Day. However, Haley indicated that the board was very open to moving the date. He suggested initiating the discussion next year with members. The tradeoff would likely be higher room rates versus encouraging more members to attend. If moved, the conference would likely be held in mid-June.

Carl Botan asked if it was worth the hassle and expense to arrange projectors for every single room. He suggested having fewer projectors available as backups. Haley said he would look into the possibility.

Haley announced that the 2008 conference would be held in Montreal at the Sheraton (room rate $135 U.S.), the 2009 conference in Chicago at the Marriott (room rate $109 U.S.) and the 2010 conference in Singapore at the Raffles Hotel (room rate around $135 U.S.).

B. ICA Membership Numbers
Overall, ICA has 3,792 members. Of that, 2,515 (66 percent) are from the United States, and 1,277 (34 percent) are from other countries. Approximately one-third (1,228) are student members: 880 (72 percent) from the United States and 348 (28 percent) from other countries.

C. Establishment of Top Student Paper Award

Establishment of a top student paper award named after Betsy Plank was discussed. As Betteke van Ruler explained, judging would be similar to that of the Robert Heath top faculty paper award, with the top four student papers (as determined by reviewers) being re-reviewed. The suggestion was made to have the past chair assemble a committee to judge the top student paper competition. Past chair Sherry Ferguson agreed to take on this responsibility. Hochang Shin noted that, whereas this year the Robert Heath competition had been coordinated by Elizabeth Toth, normally this would also be the responsibility of the past chair. Juan Carlos Molleda recommended that the issue be put to a vote. Bonita Neff moved, and Molleda seconded, that the past chair be in charge of the top student paper award. The motion passed unanimously.

D. Support for Division Newsletters

Incoming division secretary Juan Carlos Molleda will be taking over newsletter responsibility from Cindy Christen. The ICA Public Relations Division has two division newsletters. One focuses on Public Relations Division contributions to the larger ICA newsletter and will be coordinated by Molleda on behalf of Hochang Shin. The other newsletter features personal news (e.g., promotions, grants, job announcements, calls for papers, etc.) and is distributed to division members only. The division newsletter will also be coordinated by Molleda. Division members are encouraged to submit personal news items to Molleda via e-mail at <jmolleda@jou.ufl.edu>.

F. ICA Annual Board Meeting Topics

Hochang Shin provided a summary of discussions that took place at the ICA board meeting. ICA will be moving to a new building in Washington, D.C. The building is located on DuPont Circle and includes a Starbucks. Fifty percent of the rent is already covered by another tenant, so the move is a good deal for ICA.

ICA will be developing an ethics code. For more information on this and other board meeting topics, please contact Hochang Shin at <hochang@sogang.ac.kr>.

H. Presentation/Recognition of Awards

Betteke van Ruler noted that one of the 10 papers considered for the top interactive paper (poster) session award this year came from the Public Relations Division and commended authors Judy Motion and Shirley Leitch.

1. **Top Four Student Papers.** Bruce Berger acknowledged the authors of the top student papers in public relations: Sandra Braud, University of Alabama; Simon Sinaga, Texas Tech University and H. Denis Wu, Louisiana State University; Jeongsub Lim, Jiyang Bae, Hyo Jung Kim and Sun-A Kim, University of Missouri; and Baida Petersone, University of Georgia. Simon and Denis’ paper was announced as the Plank Center award recipient. Thus, the authors received $500 from the Plank Center, while the three other top paper winners received $200 respectively from the Public Relations Division.

2. **Robert Heath Top Paper Award.** Elizabeth Toth thanked judges Bruce Berger and Dean Kruckeberg. Toth then announced the winner of this year’s Robert Heath Top Paper award: Yi-Ru Regina Chen from the University of Macau, Macau.

3. **James E. Grunig and Larissa A. Grunig Top Thesis and Dissertation Awards.** Bey-Ling Sha announced the winner of the top thesis award: Jennifer Bardman from the University of Maryland. She also announced the winner of the top dissertation award: Sung-Un Yang from Syracuse University (advisor James E. Grunig, University of Maryland). Elizabeth Toth accepted the awards on behalf of Bardman and Yang.

The winner of the top dissertation award received $500, and the winner of the top thesis award received $300, from corporate sponsor Samsung. Sha thanked Hochang Shin for his fundraising.
efforts. Shin responded that the board would work hard to line up the funds needed to continue to fund the top thesis and dissertation awards.

H. Nominations for Vice Chair

Betteke van Ruler solicited nominations for vice chair of the Public Relations Division. van Ruler explained that the position involved a six-year commitment. As vice chair, the successful candidate would plan the conference program for two years. The person would then become chair for two years and afterward serve as past chair for two years, with responsibility for coordinating top faculty and student paper competitions, preparing election ballots and coordinating preconference and social activities.

Dean Kruckeberg nominated Katerina Tsetsura, who declined the nomination. Carl Botan nominated Craig Carroll, who accepted. Bonita Neff nominated Cindy Christen, who accepted. Juan Carlos Molleda nominated Bey-Ling Sha, who declined. It was then moved and approved that nominations be closed.

Kruckeberg then raised a question regarding the procedure for nominations. Sherry Ferguson responded that the Public Relations Division’s nomination procedure differed from that of ICA. ICA bylaws allow nominations at the conference. Those nominated provide biographies, and these biographies are provided to members. Write-in candidates are allowed. Botan suggested that the Public Relations Division act in accordance with ICA bylaws, submit the names of the two members nominated and allow write-in candidates. Neff agreed to check ICA rules regarding nominations.

Juan Carlos Molleda formally moved that ICA rules governing nominations be investigated and reported back to Public Relations Division members, and that future Public Relations Division elections be conducted in accordance with ICA rules. Christen seconded. During discussion, the point was raised that conferences conducted in international locations could make the nomination process difficult. If attendance is low, this could limit the number of nominees. The motion to conduct future nominations in accordance with ICA rules passed.

I. Other Business or Announcements of Interest to Division Members

Hochang Shin concluded by stating that he was honored to serve as the Public Relations Division chair. Shin noted that his first paper written in English had been published back in 1988. Since then, he had published many articles in Korean journals. Shin then suggested that ICA needed its own journal dedicated to international public relations practices. While the new International Journal of Strategic Communication will address this need to some extent, Shin expressed the need for a journal that would translate articles published in other languages into English. Dedicating such a journal to the Public Relations Division (rather than ICA in general) would allow greater flexibility with respect to publishing options. A formal proposal for the journal was requested. Members should e-mail Hochang Shin at hochang@sogang.ac.kr with their ideas for the proposed journal. In the meantime, Shin will investigate funding for the journal.

Juan Carlos Molleda thanked Cindy Christen for providing detailed instructions regarding the duties of the Public Relations Division secretary. Molleda then issued a plea to all division members, encouraging them to submit personal news items to him for inclusion in the division newsletter. Items can be submitted via e-mail to jmolleda@jou.ufl.edu.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Having been moved and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy T. Christen, Secretary
ICA Public Relations Division