Message from the Chair, Jennifer Bartlett

Welcome to the latest newsletter bringing you updates on the fantastic program and networking opportunities on offer for Public Relations division members at the San Juan Conference. Our Vice Chair Chiara Valentini has done an amazing job in getting reviews done and putting together a great program for us as you will see in this newsletter. We will welcome the new Vice Chair, Katerina Tsetsura to the Committee at the end of the conference this year.

Among the more social aspects of the program are the PR dinner, the reception and the business meeting. I wanted to preempt a few of the items on the business meeting agenda to be held on Friday 22 May and subsequent elections in September/October.

Firstly, at the meeting we will take nominations for a new secretary to replace Lee Edwards who has been so active in keeping the ICA PR community connected (thank you Lee!). The election will take place in September 2015 and the elected officer will start his/her two year term after the Fukuoka (Japan) conference in June 2016. Members who are not able to attend the Puerto Rico conference and would like either to be considered or nominate someone for the position should email a statement of intent to Chiara Valentini (c.valentini@bcom.au.dk) with the following information by May 15, 2015: (1) nominee’s name and institutional affiliation; (2) nominee’s short bio, and (3) if not a self-nomination but a nomination of another member, an email stating that the nominee is willing to be considered. If you have questions about the role, please contact Lee Edwards directly on l.m.s.edwards@leeds.ac.uk and she will be happy to discuss it with you.

Secondly, we will discuss the role of the Student member on the committee. Alice Srugies was elected during last year’s meeting and has been active throughout the year. The Student member is a new role on ICA committees and there are various models across the Association. However, the intent is to support the next generation of scholars coming into the division so the role is open to both PhD students and early career academics. I propose this as an item of discussion for this year’s meeting with a view to making the role an official committee position subject to the membership vote in 2016.

Thirdly, we will discuss the matter of division income. I urge all members to vote for increasing the amount of membership fees coming back to the division. This will not cost anyone extra, it just means changing our constitution so more of your dues come back directly to the division for hosting member activities. This vote will also be on the ballot in September/October.

We also need to discuss setting up a taskforce to raise money for the Bob Heath Top Paper award as well as the Grunig & Grunig Outstanding Thesis awards. These awards can only continue with your support. You can already contribute by making a donation to the funds, however small, via the link on this page on the ICA site. Donations can be as little as $5 and can be made at any time. Please show your support so that we can continue to reward first-class work and also to consider ways we can build these funds.

All the best! I look forward to seeing you in San Juan.

Jennifer Bartlett
Chair, ICA Public Relations Division
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Report from the Vice Chair and Program Planner, Chiara Valentini

The 2015 conference is nearly upon us, and we have a great program of papers and posters for you to enjoy. This year the number of paper submissions remained quite stable: 159 papers and extended abstracts were submitted, of which 84 were accepted and 75 rejected (an acceptance rate of 53%). Two submissions were disqualified because they either disclosed authors’ credentials or did not include a paper/extended abstract in the attachment. Of the three panel submissions received, two were accepted and one rejected. We would like to thank all the reviewers for the hard work they put into assessing this year’s submissions, their efforts were very much appreciated.

We have 17 in-program sessions on topics such as social media and dialogue, relationship and engagement, crisis and risk communication, health communication, advocacy and civil society, political and government public relations, leadership and employee communication, reputation and image management and CSR and public perceptions. A positive change in the Puerto Rico program is the inclusion of more PR posters in the General Interactive Poster Session Plenary. Ten of our papers will be presented and are in the running for ICA Interactive Poster Awards.

This year we are also pleased to have more interdisciplinary collaboration. Five of our panels are listed in the programs of the following divisions: Health Communication, Environmental Communication, Global Communication and Social Change, Political Communication, and Organizational Communication. We are also co-sponsoring two panels, one on “Politicians, Governments, and Their Strategic Communication” organized by the Political Communication Division, and the other on “Organizational Perspectives on Public Relations, Corporate Communication and Branding” organized by the Organizational Communication Division.

Top papers
Thanks to the generosity of the Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations, and the particular support of Professor Karla Gower at the Center, this year we are able to offer prizes to the three best student papers: a first prize of $300, a second prize of $200 and a third prize of $100. Best Student Papers will be presented on Friday May 22, 2015, 13:30-14:45 (Caribe Hilton, Flamingo D). This will be followed by the Best Faculty Papers Session, 15:00-16:15 (Caribe Hilton, Flamingo D). As usual, the winners will be announced during the business meeting following the Best Faculty Paper session.

Business and pleasure
Our Business Meeting is scheduled for Friday May 22 2015, 16:30-17:45 at the Caribe Hilton, Salon Del Mar. The agenda includes a discussion and approval of the social media policy and the reviewing guidelines, following the work done by our two task forces over the past year (see the information in the Autumn newsletter). Both documents will be shared with all members electronically prior to the conference and you are kindly asked to check them before the meeting. We will not be providing paper copies at the meeting, so please print your own copies if you need to.

Please do try and attend the Business Meeting, since it is important that as many members as possible are represented in the discussions we have. It is an excellent opportunity to share your opinions and shape the future of our division.
The Business Meeting will be followed by our division Reception. The annual division dinner will take place the following day, on Saturday May 23 starting at 19:30 at Casa Lola Restaurant, 1006 Ahford Avenue Condado, PR 00907, Puerto Rico Phone: 787-998-2918 (www.casalolareston.com). Casa Lola specializes in traditional Criollo cuisine with the best flavours from Puerto Rico's traditional cuisine. The dinner comprises appetizers, an entree, a dessert and unlimited sodas. The price includes a non-alcoholic beverage packet as well as gratuity and taxes. The restaurant is approx. 1 mile (1.5 km) from San Juan Caribe Hilton Hotel in the Condado area. Please note that transportation is not provided and we will meet directly at the restaurant. Delegates must register for the dinner by May 1, 2015, via the ICA conference registration site.

**Pre-Conferences**

Three pre-conferences have been organized for this year’s conference, and will take place on Thursday May 21. A brief summary of each is below, and more information can be found on our [Facebook](#) page.

**“Advancing Public Diplomacy Research: Bringing Together Political Communication and Public Relations”, 8:30-12:00, Caribe Hilton, Conference Room 10**

The focus of this preconference is political communication and international public relations concepts and strategies in public diplomacy contexts. The preconference panel will discuss conceptual and practical connections in political communication and public relations, and how interdisciplinary research from these fields could inform public diplomacy thinking and practices. This pre-conference will help spark discussion that can lead to new collaborative initiatives between these interdisciplinary fields, and illuminate tangible methods to investigate public diplomacy and nation branding from different angles and perspectives.

*Organizers: Diana Ingenhoff, University of Fribourg, Kathy Fitzpatrick, Florida International University, Candice White, University of Tennessee, Spiro Kiousis, University of Florida*

***Anyone interested in the formation of an ICA Public Diplomacy Interest Group is invited to attend a brief meeting at 11:30 a.m. in the Caribe Hilton Conference Room 10 (at the end of the pre-conference). You do not need to register for the pre-conference to attend the interest meeting.***

**“Discussion, Dialogue, Discourse: Meanings and Methods”, 9:00-15:00, Caribe Hilton, Maguey**

The focus of this preconference is theoretical and empirical contributions that add to the understanding of discussion, dialogue, and discourse with particular emphasis on the translation of these concepts into the online space. The preconference aims to bring together participants from different backgrounds, including theoretically, methodologically, and practically oriented researchers and practitioners. It thereby aims to instil a vibrant exchange on most current research on discussion, dialogue, and discourse, including case studies, empirical analyses, and theoretical pieces.

*Organizers: Uta Russmann, FH Wien University of Applied Science, Anne Lane, Queensland University of Technology*

**Public Sector Communication: The Challenge of Building Intangible Assets, 13:00-17:00, Caribe Hilton, Conference Room 10**

Co-sponsored by the Political Communication and the Public Relations divisions, this ICA preconference focuses on the role communication plays in building intangible assets for the public sector. Papers will address communication in the context of public sector organizations and
institutions as well as individual citizens. There are two sessions: the first focusing on attitudes, ideals and society as a whole, and the second focusing on tools and practices such as social media.

Organizers: Maria Jose Canel, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Vilma Luoma-aho, University of Jyväskylä

PhD workshop
A half-day PhD Workshop: “Public Relations and Strategic Communication” will also be held this year, on Thursday 21 May from 9:00 to 12:30, Caribe Hilton, Boardroom 2.

The workshop is for Public Relations and Strategic Communication PhD students at different stages of their dissertation. It provides doctoral students with an opportunity to discuss their dissertation research in a constructive atmosphere. Students receive feedback and advice on their projects, theoretical frameworks, methodologies and research designs from senior scholars and other students, who review the proposals. The workshop also serves as a platform for students working in these areas to establish valuable networks and examine a variety of issues which are important for their future careers. Senior scholars in the field will give insight on questions and the specific areas of PR research that are discussed in the PhD projects.

Organizers: Bree Devin, Queensland University of Technology, Jennifer Bartlett, Queensland University of Technology

A note from our Student Rep, Alice Srugies
Dear graduate student members,

I would like to introduce myself as the Graduate Student Representative of the PR Division. I look forward to informing you about upcoming events that are specifically designed for the young generation of scholars, including PhD workshops and summer schools, about funding opportunities and job offerings, exciting research projects and calls for publications.

As representative of the graduate student members in the division, I would like to stimulate the communication between graduate student members and senior scholars, but also foster the exchange among you. The PR Division provides great opportunities to learn more about current developments in the field of public relations research and engage in networks of support within the community of scholars. These networks can provide you with valuable feedback on the projects you are currently working on and give you useful tips on publishing and developing your career in academia. Not least, they serve as a great starting point for collaborative research projects.

If you have news you would like to communicate to the group of young scholars within the division, questions or issues you would to discuss, please don’t hesitate to contact me. The position of the Graduate Student Representative is a new addition to the PR division. It was introduced at the 2014 Annual ICA Conference in Seattle. I am very thankful for your input on what the position of the Graduate Student Representative should entail. What do you expect of a Graduate Student Representative? How can she or he help you get the best out of your membership within the PR Division? Please let me know. I am curious about your ideas and suggestions and will try my very best to incorporate them as best as possible. You can reach me by email at alice.srugies@tu-ilmenau.de.

Conferences, CFPs, events

The CFP is now out for “Crisis4, The International Crisis Communication Conference”, Campus Helsingborg, Lund University, Sweden, 7-10 Oct. please see the conference website for more information: http://isk.lu.se/crisis4

Members are invited to submit proposals for a forthcoming special issue of Mass Communication
& Society on "Climate and Sustainability Communication". The Guest Editor is Donnalyn Pompper (Temple University). The MC&S special issue shall open new conversations for integrating arenas of science and environmental communication, political communication, health communication and their respective theory and research method sets. Links between communication and sustainability have garnered significantly greater attention among scholars in Europe and Scandinavia than in North America. The aim of this special issue is to build upon traditional approaches to mass media’s role in shaping and amplifying climate/sustainability issues by opening new space for including diverse perspectives of multiple opinion leaders (including NGOs and institutions) shaped by cultural orientations – and by shaping media used to communicate about them.

A wide range of manuscripts using varied research methods and theoretical frameworks is welcomed. **Deadline for submissions is June 30, 2015**, via the Mass Communication & Society online system at http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/mcas and following the standard journal submission procedures. Authors should note in their cover letters that the submission is for the special issue devoted to “Climate and Sustainability Communication.” Final publication will be in Volume 19 (2016). In addition to the electronic submission process, please send one hard copy to: Donnalyn Pompper, Department of Strategic Communication, School of Media & Communication, Temple University, 218 Weiss Hall, Philadelphia, PA 19122. Any questions concerning this call for papers may be directed to Donnalyn Pompper, dpompper@temple.edu.

The abstracts for the 2015 **International History of Public Relations Conference**, to be held on July 8-9 at Bournemouth University, UK, have been published. You can access them [here](#).

**New Publications and other happenings**

Melissa Dodd published ‘**Brands take a stand: When speaking up about controversial issues hurts or helps business**’ in Forbes Magazine in March. It is based on research presented at ICA in 2014. She will be discussing an extension of the study at the Arthur Page pre-conference this year.

**Public Relations in the Nonprofit Sector: Theory and Practice** has just been published by Routledge as part of its series on Research in Public Relations. Edited by Richard Waters and including contributions from over 20 scholars in the field, the book makes an important contribution by filling a gap in the literature on nonprofit public relations. Both theory and empirical studies are included in chapters that cover a range of topics important to the management of nonprofit organizations, including crisis management, communicating to strengthen engagement online and offline, and recruiting and retaining volunteer and donor support.

**Business Essentials for Strategic Communicators: Creating Shared Value for the Organization and its Stakeholders**, by Matt Ragas and Ron Culp, has just been published by Palgrave Macmillan. The book’s premise is that the rise of digital media and the public’s demand for transparency has elevated the importance of communication for every business. To have a voice or seat at the table and maximize their full value, a strategic communicator must be able to speak the language and understand business goals, issues, and trends. The challenge is that many communicators don't hold an MBA and didn't study business in college. **Business Essentials for Strategic Communicators** provides communication professionals and students with the essential 'Business 101' knowledge they need to navigate the business world with the best of them, including the essentials of financial statements and terminology, the stock market, public companies, economics, corporate social responsibility, governance, reputation and more – all with an eye on how this knowledge helps them do their jobs better as communication professionals. This title is ideal for students and professionals lacking a tertiary knowledge of business.

A reminder that the ICA PR Division is represented on the Commission on Public Relations Education (CPRE), an American commission composed of public relations educators and
practitioners representing 15 professional societies in PR and related fields of communications, working with standards for graduate-level public relations education. Please see the Autumn newsletter for more information, and visit the website at http://www.commpred.org/ for more information about the Commission’s work. Alternatively, you can contact Co-Chairs Karla Gower (gow@apr.ua.edu) or Jean Valin (jvalin@videotron.ca).

Katerina Tsetsura, Vice Chair Elect of the ICA PR division and Gaylord Professor of public relations at the University of Oklahoma (OU) has been named a Director of Graduate Studies at the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication at OU. Tsetsura is honored to lead this young, vibrant Master and PhD program in Mass Communication that, in the last five years, has produced winners of the last two ICA PRD Grunig and Grunig Dissertation Awards, a 2014 NCA PRIDE award winner, and multiple ICA, NCA, and AEJMC top paper award winners.

Don’t forget to send your news to the division Secretary, Lee Edwards l.m.s.edwards@leeds.ac.uk, so that we can tell members what’s going on in the division! You can also visit our Facebook page for the latest updates and to post information.