

## **Annual Report to the International Communication Association**

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- (i) For the ICA Board Meeting, June 2016
- (ii) For the ICA Annual Report, June 2016

**Division/Interest Group:** ..... **Game Studies**

**Chair:** ..... **Nick Bowman**

**Vice chair:** ..... **Julia Kneer**

### **Report**

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*200 words: to include commentary on trends in membership numbers/diversity, past year's activities (including the annual conference), any prizes awarded, plans for the year ahead, issues to be raised in the coming year*

*Note that in the January 2008 board meeting, it was agreed to accept the Internationalisation Committee's recommendation that divisions also include, in their annual reports and at board meetings, an accounting of their efforts to achieve higher levels of international membership (e.g., number of non-US reviewers, number of awards given to scholars from outside US, officers elected from non-US countries, or special outreach initiatives undertaken to increase the international character of the division).*

*Please also note that in the January 2016 board meeting, the board approved the addition to this report of information regarding each Division/Interest Group's submission practices (e.g. abstracts vs. full papers) and the implication of those practices.*

In our first full year as a Division, GSD has continued to expand its presence within ICA and beyond. Social media is strong, with nearly 800 Twitter followers and over 500 "likes" on Facebook.

For ICA16 Fukuoka, we created an award for "best reviewer" and we're piloting a new program called "Flashlights" to spotlight our rising graduate students, in particular their innovations to theory and larger issues related to games research. We also expanded our CfP to represent virtual worlds and avatars, in hopes of broadening our Division's scope. We created more specific review guidelines for all submission types (paper, data paper, theory paper, flashlight), which led to a greater diversity of papers (e.g., more theory papers accepted). We were very strict on formal submission guidelines (such as a hard 25-page limit) with only one member expressing negative feedback – we also used a short pre-survey of our reviewers to better match papers and reviewers, with no complaints from membership. We will be hosting our fourth consecutive pre-conference at Nihon University in Tokyo on June 8, with 37 registered as of March 2016. We're also hosting our second annual "Scholar-to-Scholar Office Hours" at the main conference, where we pair up senior scholars with graduate student and early career scholars to discuss research and scholarship in an informal setting.

As a Division, we will be asking our members to vote on bylaws changes to reflect our Division status, as well add the offices of Graduate/Early Career Representative, Communications Officer, and International Liaison.

Two areas of concern raised by reviewer include (a) an option to notify reviewers about the results of the review process (similar to how journals include reviewers in the final decision process) and (b) how to handle “empty” reviewer comments.

Finally, as for the ICA16 paper competition itself, 113 papers and 3 panel proposals were submitted to GSD for the 2016 paper competition (84 empirical papers, 6 poster proposals, 11 theory papers, 10 flashlights). 92 papers and the 3 panel proposals were competitively reviewed. 60 papers (53%, lowest average score of 3.33) accepted. 34 of these papers had authors from non-US institutions (10 student). One panel was programmed. 6 papers to the Scholar-to-Scholar (poster) plenary sessions. 65 total reviewers were used, 22 students (6 from non-US institutions) and 43 faculty (17 from non-US institutions); students reviewed three papers each, faculty reviewed at most 5 papers each. Each paper was reviewed by at least one student and one faculty, and all papers (but one) had three reviewers. 34 of 275 reviews were empty.

Top paper awards were given to nine scholars (in order):

Mia Consalvo, Jason Begy, Sarah Ganzon, & Rainforest Scully-Blaker  
Vivian Hsueh Hua Chen, Claudia Wilhelm, & Sven Joeckel  
Kevin Koban (student) & Peter Ohler,

Top poster award was given to: Opeyemi Dele-Ajay (student)

Conference fee waivers were extended to Kevin Koban (top student paper), Opeyemi Dele-Ajay (top student poster), and Nathaniel Poor (best reviewer)

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