



PR UPDATE

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The news journal for the Public Relations Division of the Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication



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PR UPDATE

The News Journal for the Public
Relations Division of the Association
for Education in Journalism &
Mass Communication

v.50, #1 February 2015

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PR UPDATE is published quarterly, with a special post-conference edition. Subscription is included with Public Relations Division dues. Past issues are housed on the division website. Letters to the editor should be addressed to supa@bu.edu.

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a new era for PR UPDATE

For the past several issues, we've been teasing a major revision to PR UPDATE, and we are pleased to finally see it come to life. For many years, the PRD newsletter has kept us up to date on the latest conference happenings, news from around the academic world of public relations, and insight into current events as they affect both the teaching and research aspects of public relations (see our "look back" on page 15).

We hope to continue those traditions with our new long-form style. We will also continue to provide you with updates on the annual conference, including our annual post-conference edition. We also look forward to bringing back some old traditions, including highlighting our memberships' research activities and featuring commentary from our members on the field of public relations.

One of our goals in the new format is to allow more space for stories, greater depth of information, and more opportunities for members to share information with each other. One area that the communication teams (website, social media and newsletter) have been working on is to provide platform-appropriate information. Print is not dead (though you're probably reading this on a screen); it just needs to recognize its strengths. It is our hope that the new UPDATE will play to the strengths of a more traditional print format.

But this newsletter belongs to the membership, so if you have feedback, please share it with us. We are looking to you to provide us with material and information that you want shared, story ideas, photos, and anything else of interest. Our goal is to make PR UPDATE the go-to source for what's happening in the world of the PRD, and in public relations education. With your help, we can get there.

DS



message from the Division head

Many highlights to mark our 50th Anniversary

So many new things are in the works in the Public Relations Division this year. And, I wanted to take a few minutes to share them with you. As you will see in this issue, the editorial team of the newsletter has redesigned the look and the purpose of the publication. Kudos for the great work. The executive committee couldn't be prouder of the way this has come together. We hope you enjoy this issue and would love to hear your feedback and ideas for future issues.

As you have probably heard, the division's journals are experiencing some changes as well. A new editor has taken over for Karen Russell at the *Journal of Public Relations Research*. Bey-Ling Sha is now at the helm, and you can read more about her vision for the journal in this issue. Thank you to Karen for six excellent years of service to the division and the journal.

The division's other journal, *Teaching Public Relations Monographs*, is undergoing an even bigger change, with a new vision and a new name. The publication will now be called the *Journal of Public Relations Education*, and the upcoming issues will feature research articles as well as other types of material. More information on the journal will be shared by Chuck Lubbers, who will continue as its editor.

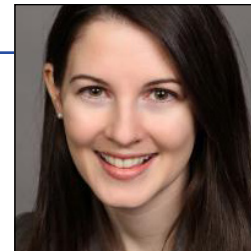
In a few months the division will launch a new website, with more information and interactive content. The website team, led by Chris Perry, has been hard at work developing new content and creating an appealing design. If you have an interest in website writing or design, the team could use more hands during this exciting time. Contact me or email Chris Perry at CPerry@fhi360.org.

In the meantime, the PRD committees are hard at work planning for the conference in August in San Francisco. We have many exciting announcements about off-site opportunities, social events, and interesting panels. So keep an eye out for more information through our social media channels, the newsletter, and our website. You'll find information in this issue about some of the panels that feature PRD members.

One of our executive committee members pointed out recently that this is the 50th anniversary of the division. It was established in 1965. We hope to celebrate the milestone at the conference this year. If you have any photos or stories that illustrate the changes over the years, we would love to gather them.

I hope you find the content in this issue useful and interesting. As always, I would love to hear your ideas to make the division more valuable for you.

Denise



2015 Annual Conference: Professional Freedom & Responsibility panels selected

We received seven professional freedom and responsibility (PF&R) panel proposals and had room to program the top two for our upcoming conference. (See the previous newsletter to learn about the top two teaching panels.) Listed below are our PF&R panels that received the most support, based on an online survey that our executive committee and PF&R team completed.

Examining the practice and ethical implications of native advertising for public relations and advertising

co-sponsors: Advertising and Media Ethics Divisions

Native advertising—one of the major topics of discussion at the 2014 Edelman Academic Summit—has seeped into the public relations industry. Many public relations practitioners are asked to use their newswriting skills to produce native advertising. Contemporary examples include The New York Times' paid article about the New York City Ballet (sponsored by Cole Haan) and its paid article about Women in Prison (sponsored by Netflix for its show "Orange is the New Black").

The panelists will define native advertising, discuss it from an instrumental perspective, share recent examples, address key challenges and opportunities, and explore ethical implications. They will also address the potential implications native advertising has on the advertising and public relations fields, as well as the democratic function of the media industry.

Panelists

The panel will be moderated by **Beth Egan** (Syracuse University), who will provide the most current industry definition of "native advertising" and provide a framework for the focus of this panel.

An **Edelman** speaker (to be determined) will likely discuss a case study that highlights the key challenges and opportunities of native tactics, as well as Edelman's organizational outlook and approach to native advertising.

Shannon Bowen (University of South Carolina) will discuss the ethical dimensions of native advertising and their impact on the public relations industry.

Guy Golan (Syracuse), the panel organizer, will address foreign government use of native advertising in mediated public diplomacy campaigns and their potential influence on public opinion and elite discourse.

Debbie Yount (University of Oklahoma) will explore the amplification of paid content, including its impact on distribution and audience growth and how brands will have greater opportunity to connect with people in contextual environments.

Bartosz Wojdyski (Georgia) will discuss the design characteristics that govern whether users perceive native ad content as paid advertising or unbiased editorial content, including eye-tracking research on effects of disclosure positioning in online native advertising.

Entertainment with a purpose: The use of fandom, infotainment and social media to promote nonprofit causes

co-sponsor: Mass Communication Division

This PF&R panel will examine the intersection of cause-related fundraising and entertainment. Additionally, this panel will explore the relationship between fans of various popular entertainment franchises and engagement with nonprofits, philanthropic causes, and charitable organizations via digital and social media.

Panelists

Erin Ryan (Kennesaw State) will discuss the Harry Potter Alliance's success with aligning fictional content with real-world societal issues, connecting fans into a networked public capable of taking coordinated action by partnering with NGOs.

Chuck Lubbers (University of South Dakota) and **Lisa Fall** (University of Tennessee) will present a case analysis of a group of local individuals who have banded together to provide a variety of entertainment events with the goal of raising money to support local programs to help those in need.

Bonita Neff (Indiana University Northwest) will talk about entertainment-sourced sponsorship, underwriting and pledging through public broadcasting.

Cynthia King (California State University at Fullerton) will talk about securing cause-related placements within entertainment media.

Jack Karlis (SUNY Buffalo State) will discuss how the World Wrestling Federation engages its fan base through philanthropy.

Brad Yates (University of West Georgia) will moderate the panel. This panel was organized by Chuck Lubbers.

Additional Panels

We did not have room to program the following panels; however, other divisions were able to prioritize them. Make sure to look for these panels in the conference program or app.



Going Pro: Teaching students to use social media as professional communicators

Magazine Division & Small Programs Interest Group

As social media play an ever-increasing role in the fields of journalism, public relations and advertising, mass communication faculty must offer curricula to teach our students how to use these newer media channels as professionals.

This session will offer ideas, tips and “lessons learned” from faculty who have developed and taught courses or units on how to transform students from casual users of social media into professional communicators on these sites. The panel will encompass the teaching of social media skills for both strategic communicators and journalists. Panelists will share teaching strategies that have produced good results in their courses and will cover such topics as course organization, readings, case studies, assignments, and in-class activities. This panel will be useful to other professors who are thinking about, or in the process of, developing their own social media courses or units within existing courses.

Lisa Weidman (Linfield College) organized the panel, and the panelists will be confirmed soon.

Preparing global leaders in journalism and mass communication

Mass Communication, Media Management & Economics, and Cultural & Critical Studies divisions

This panel addresses the urgent need to integrate leadership training into mass communication curricula to help students develop the knowledge and skills required to lead dynamic industries and organizations and a leadership mindset oriented to innovation and collaboration.

Panelists will consider the status of leadership training in the academy and in the industry, and identify opportunities for communication educators and practitioners to work together in developing leadership initiatives. They also will consider the gender gap in communication industry leadership and explore how leadership training might help women move into top industry roles with greater parity.

Panelists

Bruce Berger, (Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations, University of Alabama)

Carolyn Bronstein (DePaul University)

Kathy Fitzpatrick (Florida International University)

John Pavlik (Rutgers University)

A media executive is also expected to join the panel.

Elizabeth Toth (University of Maryland) will moderate this panel, which was organized by Carolyn Bronstein and Kathy Fitzpatrick.

Paid, owned, earned: Strategies for teaching traditional, digital, social, native advertising/branded content, big data and analytics

co-sponsors: Advertising Division and Council of Affiliates

This panel will provide faculty with strategies for teaching paid, owned and earned media concepts. It will focus on how consumers actively engage with different forms of media, as well as provide up-to-date information about this rapidly evolving industry.

Panelists

Traditional media continues to drive significant, if not the majority of volume in many agencies. **Bette Kristin** (PHD Media), **Corey Treffiletti** (Oracle Marketing Cloud), and **Beth Egan** (Syracuse) will address the changing media landscape.

Marcia DiStaso (Penn State) will explain what students need to know about using digital media for organizations, where the intersection of digital, mobile, social and local is, why it’s important, and how to “think big.”

Tina McCorkindale (Appalachian State) will lead a discussion about what students need to know about analytics.

Beth Egan (Syracuse) will address paid media, specifically providing a conceptualization of native advertising and branded content.

Patricia Mark (University of South Alabama) organized the panel and will moderate it.

Overcoming the post-tenure slump: Re-energizing your research agenda

co-sponsors: Advertising and Mass Communication divisions

Tenured associate professors have long felt a decline in their research activity following a successful tenure vote (Goodman, 1990). Exhaustion from the “publish or perish” mentality during time as an assistant professor is part of the problem, but significantly greater service obligations impact the post-tenure slump even more than exhaustion (Jacobs & Winslow, 2004). In fact, tenured associate professors spent, on average, 10 hours per week on service work more than non-tenured assistant professors (Jacobs, 2004).

This panel seeks to provide a forum for a frank discussion about the post-tenure slump. By bringing together a panel of full professors who have successfully overcome declines in research productivity and avoided professional burnout, this panel will offer advice to current associate professors who may be feeling educational burnout and need advice on how to re-energize their research agendas and commitment to higher education.

Panelists

Kim Bissell (University of Alabama)

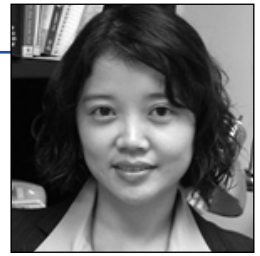
Pat Curtin, (University of Oregon)

Linda Hon (University of Florida)

Tom Reichert (University of Georgia)

Shyam Sundar (Penn State)

Richard Waters (University of San Francisco) is the moderator and organizer of this panel. ●



2015 Annual Conference: Public Relations Division Call for Papers

Submitters should carefully review the specific details and directions for the Public Relations Division as well as the general requirements contained in the AEJMC Uniform Paper Call.

Submission Categories

A paper may be submitted in one of the three PRD categories: (1) open, (2) student or (3) teaching.

Top Research, Teaching, and Graduate Student Papers

Monetary awards are given for the top three papers in each of the three categories. Thanks to a generous gift from Dennis Wilcox, Professor Emeritus, San Jose State University, top papers in open and teaching categories will be awarded: \$500 for the top paper, \$300 for the second-place paper, and \$200 for the third-place paper. Top teaching papers will also receive expedited review in the *Journal of Public Relations Education*, provided they are submitted by December 31, 2015. Thanks to the generous support of The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations at the University of Alabama, the first author of each of the top three graduate student research papers will receive \$300, \$200, and \$100, respectively.

Submission Limitations

No more than two papers may be

submitted by any one author or co-author across the three PRD categories. If it is found that one person is author and/or co-author of more than two submissions across the three PRD categories, all of the submissions will be automatically disqualified.

A paper may NOT be under review: (1) simultaneously with more than one of the three PRD categories, (2) simultaneously with more than one division within AEJMC, (3) simultaneously with the AEJMC conference and any other conference, or (4) simultaneously with the AEJMC conference and any potential publication, including refereed journals, book chapters, etc.

Authorship

When submitting co-authored papers, permission to submit the paper should be sought and obtained from all authors on the paper. Paper authorship cannot be added, deleted, or changed after submission of the paper.

Author Identification

All authors and co-authors, their institutional affiliations and contact information must be included WHEN REGISTERING on the online system. If there are three co-authors, for example, information about all three must be included in the registration. Student papers must be authored or co-authored by students ONLY (no faculty co-authors), and all student

What's New This Year?

This year's top teaching papers will receive expedited review for the *Journal of Public Relations Education*, our new division journal (which replaces *Teaching Public Relations Monographs*).

As in the past, the top three papers in the open and teaching categories will receive monetary awards, thanks to a generous gift from Dennis Wilcox.

Also as before, the top three student papers will receive monetary awards thanks to the generous support of The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations at the University of Alabama.

This year, papers cannot exceed 25 pages, EXCLUDING the abstract, references, figures and tables.



papers must have the word “STUDENT” on the title page and in the running head.

Author-identifying information MUST NOT appear anywhere in the attached paper file. Identifying information includes (1) listing of authors’ names and/or affiliations, (2) references to authors’ previous work in a way that reveals authorship of the current work, and (3) links to authors’ websites, e-mail addresses, or social media accounts. Inclusion of identifying information will result in automatic disqualification of the paper. It is the responsibility of the paper author(s) to verify that no identifying information is contained in the paper text or in the document file properties. Please follow the directions for removing your identifying information from the properties. This will need to be done EACH time you submit your paper to All-Academic.

Paper Content

Any recognized research method and citation style may be used. Papers should include appropriate literature reviews, methodology, findings and discussion. Papers should test, refine or expand public relations theory or practice; critically review issues relevant to public relations theory and research; or explore methods of effective public relations practice. Teaching papers should test, refine or expand principles or practices associated with public relations pedagogy. All submissions should represent research COMPLETED by the conference submission deadline, not research proposals or reports on research in progress.

Paper Formatting

A paper cannot exceed 25 pages EXCLUDING abstract, references, figures and tables. Papers must be typed in a 12-point font, using Times New Roman, Times, or Arial font. Paper text must be formatted with double line spacing with 1-inch

margins on all sides of the document; references may be single spaced, with a double space between citation entries. All papers must contain continuous page numbers; if multiple files are merged for the paper, then the author must ensure that the page numbers are continuous and do not repeat or start over from page 1.

Because of past conversion issues with the All-Academic system that resulted in papers being longer than the established requirement, all papers must be submitted in PDF format. For those using the newest version of Microsoft Word, you can save your paper as a PDF file using the “Save As” function. For those not using this version, you may use a free web service, such as www.freepdfconvert.com. Failure to follow these formatting guidelines will result in an automatic disqualification of the paper.

Presentation Requirement

At least one author of an accepted faculty paper must attend the conference to present the paper. If student authors cannot be present, they must make arrangements for the paper to be presented by someone else. Failure to be present or provide a presenter for any paper will result in a one-year ban on the review of papers for all of the authors involved. Authors of accepted papers are required to forward papers to discussants and moderators prior to the conference. Presentations at AEJMC conference may be disseminated via social media; presenters may opt out of social media dissemination by requesting so at the time of presentation.

Questions?

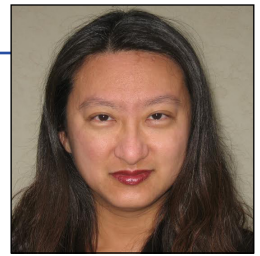
Please contact research chairs, Eyun-Jung Ki, The University of Alabama, ki@apr.ua.edu or Weiwu Zhang, Texas Tech University, weiwu.zhang@ttu.edu ●

*if you're going to
San Francisco...*

wear whatever you would like in your hair, but plan on attending the top teaching papers session on

**Sunday, August 9
9:15-10:45 am**





Behind the scenes at the Journal: *JPRR* goes to six issues in 2016

I am honored to follow in the footsteps of Jim and Lauri Grunig, Elizabeth Toth, Linda Hon, Linda Aldoory, and Karen Russell as editor of the Journal.

While Karen Russell continues her work producing the final issues to be published in 2015, my own 2016-2018 term actually begins now, as it takes about one year to produce each issue. Helping me with the work in 2015 is the 2016 associate editor, Hongmei Shen. In Q2 of this year, I will be issuing a call for the 2017 associate editor, whose duties will actually take place in 2016. For details on the duties of the associate editor, please see my application letter for the journal editorship, which PRD is reproducing in this newsletter (see the following page).

In consultation with PRD leadership, I have chosen to share my application letter with you for the following reasons: First, I want manuscript submitters to know about the enhanced process of editorial review. Second, I want to educate members about the kind of institutional support necessary to produce the Journal. And third, I want to be transparent about my vision for the Journal, as well as what I believe are my strengths as journal editor.

In December, I had a full day of orientation with staff at Taylor & Francis (whose offices in Philadelphia are located literally across the street from Independence Hall!). Our publisher put me through a rigorous day of training, during which I met with staff from the editorial, production, marketing, and manuscript management areas. It was a long day (and cold, too).

The most exciting outcome of that day was that the publisher has agreed to increase the number of issues of the Journal from five to six per year! This means more of your research can be published, and the normal lag time from manuscript acceptance to publication will be reduced. So, if your New Year's resolution is to submit more of your high-quality scholarship to the *Journal of Public Relations Research*, I encourage you to do so without delay. My editorial team and I are standing by to process your submissions!

Bey-Ling



Dear Members of the Selection Committee:

I write with grave enthusiasm to apply for the 2016-2018 editorship of the *Journal of Public Relations Research*, understanding that editorial duties for the term begin in January 2015. I am enthusiastic about this opportunity, while being gravely aware of the responsibilities and time commitment required of the position.

For three main reasons, I am well-suited to serve as the next editor of the most prestigious academic journal in public relations: (1) relevant experience; (2) institutional support; and (3) personal characteristics. This letter elaborates on each area of qualification and concludes with my vision for the *Journal*.

Relevant Experience

Academic Record and Experience – I am a tenured, full professor at San Diego State University, in the School of Journalism & Media Studies, where I have served as interim director since August 1, 2013. Since joining the SDSU faculty in 2004, I have published more than a dozen articles across the three primary journals of our field, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, *Public Relations Review*, and *Public Relations Journal*. Of these publications, three theoretically ground-breaking articles appeared in *JPRR* as solo-authored pieces (Sha, 2004, 2006, and 2009). My CV shows that I have remained a “pure” public relations scholar whose work has examined concepts and issues central to our field, such as symmetry, identity, gendered pay inequity, and professionalism. I have won top research paper honors from every major, academic public relations/ communication association based in the United States¹, and I have conducted research in multiple languages (English, French, Chinese) on three continents (North America, Europe, Asia), using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Editorial Experience – I was editor of a special issue on diversity in public relations for *Public Relations Journal*, published in June 2013². In that role, I undertook the full range of editorial duties: I wrote the call for manuscripts, solicited manuscripts, reviewed them for appropriateness to the mission of the journal and the diversity issue, selected reviewers, managed the review process, notified authors of results, copyedited accepted manuscripts, formatted them for online publication, worked with staff from the Public Relations Society of America to upload the final articles online, and filed a final report with the PRSA national board of directors. This experience gave me a clear understanding of the entire process of producing a research journal.

For 2012 and 2013, I served as research co-chair for the Public Relations Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. In that role in 2013, I

rewrote the call for papers to clarify submission requirements, developed templates for correspondence to authors and reviewers, reviewed all submissions for compliance with competition rules, and read all submitted papers to confirm blinding of authorship. Subsequently, I enforced paper competition rules with consistency, documented evidence for disqualification of papers, and handled upset disqualified authors (including one senior scholar who still won't speak to me). Also, I recruited reviewers, surveyed them about topics and methods they felt qualified to review, assigned manuscripts to reviewers, prodded recalcitrant reviewers, read all reviews, and admonished reviewers who used the review process to rant about the lack of citations of their own work. Then, I organized accepted manuscripts into themed sessions, assigned session moderators and respondents, filled out paperwork to build the conference program, and proofread all program entries for the division.

Last, I wrote the paper competition report, which I personally delivered at the conference during the division business meeting. And, to help my successors, I wrote a research chair's handbook, outlining all position duties, detailed tasks, and their execution timeline. This experience let me practice management of the manuscript review process and confirmed my ability to calmly deal with upset authors and reviewers.

Separately, I have also reviewed conference paper submissions for the public relations divisions of AEJMC, the International Communication Association, and the National Communication Association.

These experiences showed me the wide variety of scholarship being produced in our field, not all of which ends up presented or published.

I serve on the editorial boards of *Journal of Public Relations Research*, *Public Relations Review*, and *Public Relations Journal*. Since 2009, I have also reviewed manuscripts for *Communication Research*, *Communication Theory*, *Journal of Business Communication*, *Journal of Communication*, *Journalism & Communication Monographs*, *PRism*, and *Western Journal of Communication*. This experience gave me glimpses of scholarship being done in areas related to public relations, which in turn provides insight into how public relations research is situated vis-à-vis other disciplines.

With Dr. Glen Broom, I was co-author of the 11th edition of Cutlip & Center's *Effective Public Relations*, published in 2013. In that effort, I proposed specific content changes needed for

A copy of Dr. Sha's application to serve as editor of *Journal of Public Relations Research* reprinted here in the interest of transparency and to inform the membership of the scope of work involved in the *Journal's* production. The original application, dated June 30, 2014 is reproduced in its entirety - with the exception of personal contact information for those outside of the Division. The formatting has also been modified.

¹ Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication; International Communication Association; National Communication Association; Public Relations Society of America; and the International Public Relations Research Conference.

² See <http://www.prsa.org/Intelligence/PRJournal/Vol7/No2>.



the new edition, researched relevant materials, wrote new copy for one-third of the chapters, copyedited the other two-thirds of the book that had been written by Dr. Broom or other contributors, and proofread the entire manuscript, correcting errors that had been missed (as well as those added) by our “professional copyediting vendor,” to whom the publisher had outsourced the task. This experience underscores my attention to detail, as well as my commitment to the important relationship between public relations research and pedagogy.

At the request of current editor Dr. Karen Russell, I co-wrote with Dr. Pat Curtin and Dr. Maria Len-Rios the JPRR manuscript submission guidelines that are currently in use. Thus, I am intimately familiar with these guidelines, and I do not foresee a need to change them dramatically in the near future.

Project Management Experience – I have a strong history of shepherding major, team projects from start to finish. As a public affairs officer with the U.S. Census Bureau from 1999 to 2004, I oversaw national programs and events to promote the 2000 census. I also designed and executed the plan to evaluate outputs and outcomes from the census promotional campaign, which won a Silver Anvil Award of Excellence from PRSA. As the 2010 and 2011 chair of PRSA’s National Committee on Work, Life and Gender, I oversaw PRSA’s 2010 Work-Life-Gender Survey, which has yielded more than a dozen scholarly manuscripts to date, despite the project’s lack of external funding. I also managed the 2010 Practice Analysis as chair of the research workgroup of the Universal Accreditation Board. In that capacity, I led the research team to produce from that national study more than 12 manuscripts, three of which became articles that I solo-authored in *Public Relations Review*.

In 2013, I successfully obtained a \$25,000 grant from the PRSA Foundation to recruit Spanish-speaking Hispanic students into the public relations profession. Being executed this year under my supervision, the project entails piloting a bilingual course in mass media writing, recruitment and retention of targeted students, and mentoring those students through professional networks set up through community partnerships and internships.

As 2014 chair of the Universal Accreditation Board, I oversee activities related to celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Accredited in Public Relations credential, as well as ongoing work to administer the accreditation program. So far this year, we have launched a Certificate in Principles of Public Relations targeting college seniors, continued with our specialized credential APR+M (military communication), revamped the UAB website, worked with a PRSA task force to strengthen the APR, conducted a rigorous internal review of all live questions on the Computer-based Examination, and taken major steps toward making the work of the UAB more transparent, among many other activities – all with only volunteer labor.

These experiences provide concrete evidence of my ability to manage large projects involving many people and moving parts. My project management ability is grounded in my strong organizational and time management skills, as well as my talent

for implementing processes and procedures to facilitate the attainment of project goals.

Institutional Support

I understand very well the time commitment required of the editor position, as well as the breadth of tasks that need to be executed in order to produce five issues each year. I have given these issues much reflection, and I have sought the input of past editors, the current editor, my academic mentors, my faculty and staff, and my dean. Integrating everyone’s insights with some of my own ideas, I propose the following ways to ensure that the editorial workload for the Journal is streamlined for maximum efficiency and effectiveness, should I be selected as its next editor.

Course Release – As interim director of the School of Journalism & Media Studies, I am contractually obligated to teach one course per academic year. My dean has agreed to release me from this obligation so that I can devote that time instead to the Journal.

Direct Administrative Support³ – As interim director of my academic unit, I propose to offer direct administrative support to the Journal. Specifically, 10% of the workload of one Administrative Support Coordinator II in my School would be dedicated to handling the more mundane, yet still important, tasks related to the editorial process. These would include initial processing of received manuscripts; reviewing manuscripts for appropriate blinding of authorship and correct formatting of text, tables, figures, page numbers, etc.; handling routine correspondence with authors and reviewers using the manuscript management system; and tracking the progression of manuscripts through the review process. I believe this kind of support for some previous editors was provided by graduate assistants. The direct administrative support that I propose here has the advantage of being one consistent individual over time, who would require only initial training in 2015. The staff member in question already has years of experience managing double-blinded faculty reviews of graduate student comprehensive-examination papers, processing about 80 sets of exams per year. And, she holds a master’s degree in educational technology, which ensures her ability to handle the online technicalities of the manuscript management system.

Indirect Administrative Support⁴ – To increase the time I could devote to the journal as its editor, I would offload some



^{3,4} The proposed adjustments of workload for both my administrative support coordinators are possible at this point in time only because our academic unit is being joined by another campus department, effective July 1. The Collective Bargaining Agreement governing staff positions restricts the general ability of supervisors to change people’s position descriptions. This merger of my unit with another offers a rare opportunity to update the position descriptions for the staff involved and thus for me to offer the Journal both direct and indirect administrative support for the duration of my editorship. I need to file updated staff position descriptions with SDSU Human Resources by July 7. For this reason, I would welcome timely indication of whether my application for editorship is acceptable, as I would need to restructure staff workloads differently if I am not the new editor.

duties related to my position as interim director of my School to others on our administrative team. Specifically, 20% of the workload of a second Administrative Support Coordinator II in my unit would be dedicated to special events planning and execution. Because these special events duties are quite time-consuming for me, re-assignment of these tasks to a member of my administrative team would free up time for me to edit the Journal.

Associate Editor – In anticipation of receiving 120 to 150 manuscripts per year for review, I propose the establishment of an associate editor position.

Position Duties. I envision the associate editorship as a one-year position for a tenured associate or full professor of public relations. With technical aspects of the review process already handled through direct administrative support, the associate editor would concentrate on initial review of submissions for their quality. Specifically, the associate editor would vet manuscripts for clarity of conceptualizations, as well as for the appropriateness and rigor of research methods. This would enable me, as the editor, to concentrate on whether the research makes a genuine contribution to public relations theory, before assigning the manuscript to reviewers, and then making final editorial decisions regarding each reviewed manuscript.

Quality Control. To ensure that the editor and the associate editor are aligned in their perspectives, we would both conduct quality reviews of the first 10 manuscripts submitted at the start of each year, as well as of five manuscripts submitted during the start of Q3. This would total 15 manuscripts out of an expected 150 (i.e., 10%) subjected to quality control each year.

One-year Term. I believe that the associate editor, like the editor, should not be able to submit his/her own research to the Journal. For this reason, I propose that the term of the associate editorship last only one year, so that scholars in that position are not sacrificing their own scholarly advancement in service to the profession.

Training and Mentoring. Keeping the associate editorship to one year also means that, in the three-year term of my editorship, the Journal would have the opportunity to educate up to three potential future editors. This kind of training would be not only invaluable to the individuals selected for the associate editor position, but also helpful for the Journal in future selections and transitions of editors.

2015 Associate Editor. I am certain that we all desire a smooth transition of the Journal into 2015, and I recognize that the first year of any editorship typically sees an uptick in manuscript submissions, as authors “feel out” a new editor. For this reason, I propose the initial associate editor to be Dr. Hongmei Shen, my tenured, associate professor colleague at San Diego State. Dr. Shen holds a Ph.D. in communication and a Graduate Certificate in Measurement, Statistics and Evaluation from the University of Maryland. These academic credentials reflect her

ability to hold both qualitative and quantitative scholarship to the most rigorous standards of research design and data analysis. Also, she has served on the Journal’s editorial board since 2012 and is thus familiar with the review process. Dr. Shen served on my research team for the PRSA Work-Life-Gender project, so I can attest to her work ethic and our ability to work well together.

2015 Support for Associate Editor. To support Dr. Shen as the 2015 associate editor for the Journal, our dean would release her from teaching one course per semester.

2016 Associate Editor. Appointment of Dr. Shen for the 2015 position would give me more than a year to conduct a thorough, national search for the 2016 associate editor, including vetting candidates in person at the 2015 AEJMC conference in San Francisco.

Office Space – Physically, the Journal would be housed in the School of Journalism & Media Studies, which has a main office suite of approximately 1,200 square feet. Conceptually, the Journal would be hosted by San Diego State’s Glen M. Broom Center for Professional Development in Public Relations. The mission of the Broom Center is professional development of public relations students through internships, of faculty through research support, and of practitioners through life-long learning. Hosting the Journal of Public Relations Research is thus well-aligned with the Broom Center’s mission to enhance the professional development of public relations faculty by encouraging their scholarly research efforts. This connection also would help raise the profile of the Journal among public relations students and practitioners, who all would benefit from a greater appreciation for public relations research and theory.

Foundation Account – To receive and disburse the editor stipend, I could set up a designated account with the San Diego State University Research Foundation, at an F&A rate of 56%. I am also willing to avoid bureaucracy and receive the stipend personally, even though that entails paying income tax thereon. My understanding is that the stipend amount has remained unchanged for at least the last decade, despite rising costs for everything that an editor could possibly use the funds for, including travel, administrative support, technology, etc. Thus, I propose that the editor stipend be raised from \$750 to \$1,000 per issue, and that the associate editor position be granted an additional \$500 per issue. I would expect to use these funds primarily for travel support to conferences⁵, so that I could appropriately execute the editorial duties of manuscript solicitation, reviewer selection, and journal promotion.



⁵ As interim director of our School, I no longer have conference travel support, which is reserved for faculty presenting their research.

Personal Characteristics

Commitment – I am deeply committed to rigorous scholarship that contributes to the continued development of public relations theory and that builds the body of knowledge in our field. Indeed, this commitment is my primary reason for seeking the editor position, and this application letter itself is a reflection of that commitment. If I were not seriously committed to public relations scholarship, I would not have agonized over whether to apply for this position, nor would I have taken great pains to carefully weave the strong web of institutional support that I propose to offer.

Reputation – I have a strong reputation among public relations scholars and practitioners as a person of integrity who consistently holds herself and others to high standards of performance and professionalism. Through my service to AEJMC, ICA, NCA, and PRSA, I have established myself as someone who expects civil discourse, tolerates no nonsense, distinguishes issues from people, and concentrates on getting done the job at hand. Thus, I am optimistic that authors with a proclivity toward whining about editorial decisions will think twice before doing so, should I be the next JPRR editor. Nevertheless, I recognize that a journal editor cannot (and should not) make all contributors happy; some differences of opinion are inevitable. I expect to take such intellectual disagreements in stride, as I have both a high tolerance for criticism and the ability to not take things personally.

Networks – Thanks to generous travel support from San Diego State, I have presented refereed research manuscripts at nearly every meeting in the last decade of AEJMC, ICA, NCA, PRSA, and the International Public Relations Research Conference. Unlike some conference-goers, I actually attend all the research paper presentations and business meetings. Doing so has enabled me to build strong professional networks and to know the professional networks of others. For the Journal, this means that I have a very good sense for who is doing research on what and with whom. This knowledge would facilitate my selection of appropriately qualified manuscript reviewers and my assignment of manuscripts to reviewers with no conflicts of interest.

Vision for the Journal

With strong institutional support from San Diego State, I propose a vision for the Journal that builds on the strengths

of the past while coming full circle to the original purpose set forth by Drs. Jim and Lauri Grunig when they published the first Public Relations Research Annual in 1989. Specifically, I would continue to welcome diverse streams of public relations scholarship; manuscripts grounded in a wide range of quantitative, qualitative, historical, and critical research methods; and contributions from non-U.S.-based scholars as both authors and reviewers.

I would also seek ways to continue enhancing the global prestige of the Journal, not only among public relations scholars and practitioners, but also among our non-public relations colleagues and administrators. For example, I would invite guest reviewers, when appropriate, to participate in vetting manuscripts submitted to the Journal, rather than relying strictly on members of the editorial board. I would propose conference sessions where journal authors and public relations practitioners converse about connections between theory and practice, to reduce perceptions that academics don't understand the so-called "real world." I would also promote the Journal to journalism and communication administrators around the world, encouraging

them to accord JPRR its rightful place in the tenure and promotion process as a premier publication. In that effort, I would be helped by my current role as an academic administrator, as well as by my regular participation in activities of the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Ultimately, I would staunchly re-affirm the unique place of JPRR in the ever-growing pantheon of academic journals: We publish research that is conceptually sound, methodologically rigorous, theoretically ground-breaking, and centrally focused on public relations.

I hope that the members of the selection committee concur with my vision for our beloved *Journal of Public Relations Research*; I would be honored to execute on this vision as the next editor of JPRR. If you have any questions regarding my application or the specific elements proposed in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me at bsha@mail.sdsu.edu

Sincerely,

Bey-Ling Sha, Ph.D., APR
Professor and Interim Director
School of Journalism & Media Studies
San Diego State University

JPRR Review Process

1. Register and submit your paper at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/HPRR>
2. Submission is screened by CrossCheck to verify originality.
3. Manuscript is reviewed by Editorial Assistant for technical compliance.
4. Manuscript is reviewed by Associate Editor for general research quality.
5. Paper goes to Editor for review and assignment to reviewers.





rapid reaction:

This Just IN: State of Indiana vs. the Media

It is my pleasure to introduce to you one of our new PR UPDATE features - the rapid reaction. It is our hope that it provides a platform for our members to comment on issues facing public relations researchers and educators, on current events that are important to the public relations field, or on any other topic that could benefit from an informed commentary. We will continue to add other features as well, but this space will be reserved for our membership to offer their opinions. If you are interested in being featured in rapid reaction, please email the UPDATE editor at supa@bu.edu with a brief synopsis of your idea. We will do our best to work with you to make sure your thoughts make it to the column.

Having spent much of my academic career investigating the media relations function of public relations (and the first part of that career living in Indiana), I was surprised one morning to get multiple news alerts talking about Just IN, the attempt by the state of Indiana to create a news portal for information. Having lived away from the Hoosier State for the past four years, I had to do a little digging to find out what was happening.

My initial investigation (through various news stories) revealed that the governor of Indiana was launching a news site that would be able to provide information to journalists that would be easier to access than the current system, and would allow more easily shared information between the state government and the media. It sounded like a good idea. (I'm sure it sounded like a good idea to the administration, too). In our field's constant effort to be more transparent with the media, to provide information that is of greater use, and to overall be more trustworthy and credible sources of information, creating a website dedicated to providing information to journalists might just accomplish some of those goals. In fact, nearly every major organization has an online pressroom where stories are shared, press releases posted, and information journalists need is catalogued. So why then, shouldn't our state governments do the same thing?

Except that when the Indianapolis Star got hold of a question and answer sheet, it revealed, "*At times, Just IN will break news — publishing information ahead of any other news outlet. Strategies for determining how and when to give priority to such 'exclusive' coverage remain under discussion.*" (as reported by Tom LoBianco at the Indianapolis Star)

Danger, Will Robinson!

Effective media relations involves working *with* the media. It means spending time developing relationships, providing useful information, connecting journalists with the people they want to speak with, and perhaps most importantly, respecting and understanding they have a job to do. It doesn't hurt to keep in mind that it's still a business relationship; it is the job of the journalist to get the story; and if that ruffles some feathers in your organization, remember that it's not (necessarily) personal.

Just IN, however, made it personal. And they did it with tax dollars. The idea to create a news site doesn't surprise me. Many organizations today have the ability to communicate directly with their publics through social media, create effective news sites and leverage content marketing so that consumers are able to find out stories and news without ever having to read a traditional news story.

So what's the issue with Just IN? Media relations is a relationship; having your own news outlet makes you a journalist. Effective media relations folks might be considered partners in the dissemination of information, but they're not journalists. Journalists have a job to do and don't want to be *told* what the news is; they just want your help in getting the whole of the story to their audiences.

That -- and the concept of "state-run media" is kind of scary to most people.



A look back : PR UPDATE through the years

In preparation for our new format, the PR UPDATE staff spent a lot of time going over newsletters from the past. We thought it would be fun to share some of the highlights from those newsletters. If you want the whole story, check out the archived issues on the PRD website.

5 years ago - 2010

Division Head Patricia Swann was the leading the division west - to Denver - for the annual conference. Kester Tay, Rasiah Agatha, May Lwin and Gus Pang earned the top research paper that year, the top teaching paper went to Cathy Rogers and Valerie Andrews, and Katie Place had the top student paper.

Don Stacks, Suzanne Horsley, Susan Gonders and Robert Pritchard received SuPRstar awards.

Papers that year maxed at 30 pages, and that included your references, tables and appendices.

The Denver conference had an acceptance rate of 39% - which equaled 58 of 153 submissions.

10 years ago - 2005

We were heading to San Antonio for the annual conference. In August. Weather: warm.

The call for papers that year still included a postal address, though many people emailed them to research chair Michael Parkinson. Tom Kelleher was handling the teaching paper duties. All under the careful eye of division head Teresa Mastin.

Alan Freitag wrote the InSitu Research column for the Spring newsletter, and concluded with a great thought, "Perhaps...the more we extend public relations tenets of excellence, social responsibility and ethics to the larger organizational and societal levels, the less frequently we will see the likes of Enron, Tyco and similar failures."

We mourned the losses of
R. Ferrell Ervin, Ralph Frede and Richard Long.

15 years ago - 2000

For even warmer weather, we were all heading to Phoenix to conference. And yes, in August.

It was Barb DeSanto's year as Division Head. 40 papers were submitted to the research competition. The Division had 5 sessions to fill, so a total of 21 papers were presented.

It was reported in UPDATE that one of the first courses solely devoted to public relations history had been taught (a one-week course at Southwest Missouri State).

The division mourned the passing of Scott Cutlip in August. Glen Broom closed his tribute by saying "He and his work stood the test of time."

Alan Freitag reported the listserv membership to be at...nearly 35! (It wasn't a good number then either).

Pamela Bourland-Davis became the first division member to serve as vice chair-elect, vice chair and chair, as the vice chair-elect position had only recently come into being.

It was a year of awards for the division - James van Leuven received a lifetime achievement award from Colorado PRSA; Don Stacks won the IPR Pathfinder Award; Kathy Kelly won the Jackson, Jackson & Wagner Award; and Ray Simon was named one of PRWeek's most influential PR people for the 20th century.



We want to feature your ideas & news. Our final page(s) will highlight news from you, job announcements, changes in positions, letters to UPDATE, and anything else you want to share that doesn't fit into one of our feature columns. Please send your news to supa@bu.edu, and we will be happy to feature it in PR UPDATE.

Our next issue will be out in March.
Our normal production schedule is January, March, July and November, with a special post-conference issue. We look forward to your feedback, and even more so to seeing you in San Francisco in August!