

**Annual Report of the
Public Relations Division (PRD)
of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC)**

Submitted by Susan Grantham, PRD Head, June 24, 2013

(1) Officers

- 2012-2013 Division Head: Susan Grantham, University of Hartford
- Vice Head and Programming Chair: Natalie Tindall, Georgia State University
- Vice Head-Elect: Denise Bortree, University of Pennsylvania
- Secretary: Cheryl Lambert, Boston University
- Immediate Past Head: Heidi Hatfield Edwards, Florida Institute of Technology
- Newsletter Editor: Emily Kinsky, West Texas A&M University
 - Contributors: Liz Bates, Baylor University, and Dustin Supa, Boston University
- Nominations Committee: Heidi Hatfield Edwards, Florida Institute of Technology;
Colleen Connelly-Ahearn (Head 2011), Penn State University
- Technology and Social Media Co-Chair: Chris Perry, University of North Carolina
- Technology and Social Media Co-Chair: Tiffany Derville Gallicano, University of Oregon
- Technology and Social Media Co-Chair: Geah Pressgrove, University of South Carolina
- Technology and Social Media Co-Chair: Karen Freberg, University of Louisville
- Technology and Social Media Co-Chair: Melissa Dodd, SUNY Oswego
- Listserv Manager: Alan Freitag, University of North Carolina – Charlotte
- Journal of Public Relations Research Editor: Karen Miller Russell, University of Georgia
- Research Co-Chair: Suman Lee, Iowa State University
- Research Co-Chair: Bey-Ling Sha, San Diego State University
- Teaching Co-Chair: Emily Kinsky, West Texas A&M University
- Teaching Co-Chair: Brian Smith, Purdue
- Professional Freedom & Responsibility Co-Chair: Jennifer Vardeman-Winter, University of Houston
- Professional Freedom & Responsibility Co-Chair: Michele Ewing, Kent State University
- Past Heads Council Chair and 2006 Division Head: Colleen Connelly-Ahearn (Head 2011), Penn State University
- Elected Delegate/Membership Co-Chair: Seth Oyer, Bowling Green State University
- Membership Co-Chair: Trent Seltzer, Texas Tech University – Lubbock
- Membership Co-Chair: Giselle Auger, Duquesne University
- Susanne A. Roschwalb Co-Chair: Weiwu Zhang, Texas Tech University – Lubbock
- Susanne A. Roschwalb Co-Chair: Eyun-Jung Ki, University of Alabama
- Susanne A. Roschwalb Co-Chair: Jensen Moore, Louisiana State University
- Inez Kaiser Award Co-Chair: Meta Carstarphen, University of Oklahoma
- Inez Kaiser Award Co-Chair: Teresa Mastin, Depaul University
- Inez Kaiser Award Co-Chair: Antoneta M. Vanc, Quinnipiac University

- Graduate Student Liaison: Tricia Farwell, Middle Tennessee State University
- Graduate Student Liaison: Melissa Janoske University of Maryland
- Graduate Student Liaison: Graduate Student Liaison: Katie Stansberry, University of Oregon
- Professional/Conference Liaisons: Matt Ragas, DePaul University
- Professional/Conference Liaisons: Judy VanSlyke Turk, Virginia Commonwealth University
- Professional/Conference Liaisons: Julia Fraustino, University of Maryland
- Professional/Conference Liaisons: Hua Jiang, Towson University
- Co-Liaison to the Public Relations Society of America: Andy Lingwall, Clarion University of Pennsylvania
- Co-Liaison to the Public Relations Society of America: Stephen Whyte, Utah Valley University
- Co-Liaison to the Public Relations Society of America: Hongmei Shen, San Diego State University
- Fundraising Co-chair: Carolyn Kim, Biola University
- Fundraising Co-chair: Hua Jiang, Towson University
- Fundraising Co-chair: Lucinda Austin, Elon University
- Fundraising Co-chair: Geah Pressgrove, University of South
- Fundraising Co-chair: Yi Luo, Montclair State University
- PRD Delphi Study Chair – Susan Grantham, University of Hartford
- PRD Delphi Study Collaborators - Natalie Tindall, Georgia State University, Geah Pressgrove, University of South Carolina

(2) Diversity

Diversity Counts

	White	Black	Hispanic	M- Eastern	Asian	Totals	% Minority
Officers	31	5			7	43	38
Moderators/discussants	20	4			5	29	31
Panelists	21				2	23	10
Paper Authors	92	3	1		41	137	33
Paper Reviewers	109	5	1		12	127	14
Totals	273	17	1		66	359	126
Discussion	76%	5%	>1%		18%	--	35%

(3) Initiatives

Units of conference programming:

Conference Initiatives

	Research	Teaching	PF&R
Pre-Conference		1	
Co-sponsored Panels	1	3	2
Paper Presentations	6	1	
Off-site luncheon and corporate visit			2
Totals	7	5	4
% Distribution	39%	28%	22%

In a division with over 300 members and traditionally about 125 submitted research papers, there will always be a need to support the research. However, because the PRD was able to secure enough poster slots this year, we were able to accommodate the research papers and dedicate sessions to teaching and PF&R. The numbers for the three areas are in closer alignment than in past years. Additionally, we were able to dedicate a session to the top student papers, which we have not done in the past.

The pre-conference this year is focusing on a national teaching report. Traditionally the preconference session is dedicated to either teaching or PF&R.

Additionally, as AEJMC has moved to a permanent Thursday-Sunday schedule, we will try to move our off-site visit to later in the day, or weekend day, because as it stands now, combined with our off-site lunch sponsored by Edelman, we lose ½ day of programming availability. Losing this half day has required us to run sessions all the way through Sunday (three years running now) which often presents problems for presenters and attendees as many attendees begin classes on Monday and they simply cannot stay that late in the day and catch a flight home.

(4) Goals

Research Goals Accomplished:

- The PRD undertook a Delphi Study this year to identify areas the division will focus on moving forward. The study was comprised of three rounds where issues were identified, commented upon and ranked. The results will be sent to the past heads committee, shared with the incoming leadership, and posted on the PRD website. The study participants were comprised of long-term members, junior faculty, graduate students and non-members. The results indicate a preference for creating a solid foundation for:
 - Mentoring relationships
 - Increasing/maintaining conference attendance (in light of NCA having moved their paper submission deadline to overlap with AEJMC’s deadline)
 - Fundraising for need-based travel for all members but especially graduate students
 - Journal creation – the discipline is growing exponentially but the public relations publishing outlets have not kept pace with this growth. There is a need for more public

relations research-specific journals as new professors continue to compete with seasoned researchers for an increasingly limited number of journal outlets.

- Improved review regimen – In the PRD the research paper chairs assign each paper to an assistant, associate and full professor (and grad student occasionally). We have posted examples of good and less good papers and explanations as to what made one good and the other less good, but there continues to be a sense that reviewers are not qualified based on the wide range of scores for the same paper.
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- This year we are able to devote an entire panel to top graduate student papers because the PRD earned an extra chip for being one of the groups with the most number of papers submitted in 2012.
- Continued funding for the third year of the Wilcox Awards, for top three faculty/open conference papers and the top three teaching papers. Funding levels are \$500 for Top Paper, \$300 for Second Place Paper, \$200 for Third Place Paper.
- Continued funding by the Plank Center for the top three student authored paper awards. Funding levels are \$300 for Top Paper, \$200 for Second Place Paper, \$100 for Third Place Paper. Additionally, the first author of each of these papers is provided with conference registration courtesy of the PRD and if the Roschwalb Award winner is unable to attend the conference, the first author on the fourth place top student paper is given the registration.
- Continued poster awards for best visual presentation to enhance the professionalism and underscore prestige of these presentations.
- Published one “Special Topic” issue in the *Journal of Public Relations Research* in each of the last four years.

Research Goals for the Future:

- Increase applications for Roschwalb Scholarship (a \$250 award for a student wishing to complete an international public relations research project).
- Increase applications for Kaiser Scholarship (a \$250 award for a student of color).
- Increase understanding of the research paper submission guidelines in terms of removing identifying information. For the third year in a row there were multiple issues involved in the submission process but the bulk of these centered on the fact that submitters did not remove the identifying information, AND, we have found, other divisions and IGs respond to this differently. Initially we planned on DQing these papers but these submissions represented 40% of the papers submitted so we asked Felicia to remove the identifying information (we won't do this in the future – those papers will automatically be DQ'd). Other divisions did simply DQ papers with identifying information and thus there is not a level playing field between all of the divisions and IGs. We DQ'd 17 papers for other violations (self plagiarizing, same paper submitted to NCA, length too long) and moved one to another division on the author's request. Therefore we will saturate all of our communication channels with this information and address this yet again in our business meeting.

Teaching Goals Accomplished:

- Continued funding for the third year of the Wilcox Awards, for top three teaching conference papers. The funding levels are \$500 for Top Paper, \$300 for Second Place Paper, \$200 for Third Place Paper.
- PRD continued its strong leadership presence in the PRSA Learning to Teach initiative.
- PRD has continues its syllabus exchange program and its content is available on its redesigned Website.

Teaching Goals for the Future:

- Continue the PRD’s SuPRstar program to document non-convention teaching activities.
- Continue to revitalize the faculty-student mentoring program.
- Expand the syllabus exchange.

Other Goals Accomplished

- PRD continues to increase its visibility on Facebook, Twitter and we added Pinterest. The AEJMC Public Relations Division Facebook presence moved to the new group format with 248 followers, an increase of 51%. Each week the SM committee posts information about the PRD and/or its members. The @ AEJMC_PRD now has 595 followers, an increase of 73%. Pinterest has 13 boards, 317 pins, 125 followers and we follow 73 accounts. Additionally the committee has developed a set of rubrics in terms of members’ SM usage and interactions. The next SM outlet will be a PRD LinkedIn Group.
- The PRD, under the leadership of a new newsletter committee, versus a newsletter person, widely expanded the scope and depth of our newsletters this past year. The feedback has been widely positive.
- The PRD has continued to increase its visibility on AEJMC’s standing committees. Our Past Heads group actively recruited nominations from the division and promoted the elections and PRD member candidates.

Other Goals for Future

- Use information from the Delphi study to identify areas for leadership focus.
- Continue to increase use and subscriptions of Twitter account.
- Continue to increase use and members of Facebook group.
- Continue to expand Website offerings.

(5-12) Research

	Open	Student	Teaching	Total
Paper Submissions*	76	27	12	117
Paper Acceptances	44	9	5	58

% Acceptance	58%	34%	42%	50%
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*Does not include 17 papers disqualified.

(5-8) Paper Submissions and Paper Judging

Research activities account for 39% of 2012 PRD conference programming. With a high number of conference paper submissions, PRD has labored with securing enough conference presentation slots. We were fortunate at the chipping meeting this year and were able to secure enough slots and even returned 13 slots for other divisions to use.

Pool of judges: The current research chairs built upon past lists of reviewers and a call went out to the membership to recommit to reviewing (a cursory review of reviewers indicate that smaller PR academic programs represent a much higher rate of reviewers than larger PR academic programs). The chairs once again matched interest areas of the reviewers with the submitted papers and each paper was reviewed by an assistant, an associate and a full professor. By dividing the reviews in this manner, the process was fairly distributed so that no paper was judged too harshly by advanced scholars or too lightly by junior scholars. All papers were evaluated using the form provided by AllAcademic.com. We used 125 reviewers (77 for open, 29 for student, and 19 for teaching paper competition)

Quantity of Presentation Slots: This year PRD did have enough program slots for its accepted research and we were able to return 13 poster slots for other divisions to use. The PRD is hopeful that under the new scheduling system that there will be a more systematic way to predict how many panels and poster/HD slots will be available.

(9) Other Referred Competitions

The PRD has three competitions for students – Roschwalb, Kaiser and Plank.

Suzanne A. Roschwalb Grant for International Study and Research – Applications are vetted annually by the Roschwalb chairs. In addition to an annual contribution from the publisher of JPRR, members also support the Roschwalb program. The Roschwalb account currently has a balance of \$6,326. However, considering declining interest rates, that principal does not generate the annual interest to sustain the awards and maintain principal. This year’s winner is Saraab Kochhar from the University of Florida.

Inez Kaiser Graduate Student of Color Award - Named in honor of the first black woman to own a public relations agency, the Inez Kaiser Graduate Student of Color Award is designed to enhance the membership and diversity of PRD. By providing graduate students of color with one-year memberships in AEJMC and PRD, the awards encourage the academic career aspirations of these students. In turn, the students’ involvement broadens the diversity of voices within PRD. This award had been tabled for several years but is now again being offered and the committee for this award, in conjunction with the fundraising committee, are exploring options for continued funding. Plans are being made to find a donor to cover this award and perhaps increase it. This

year's winners are: Arunima Krishna and Dana Hatfield. The committee supported both candidates and offered to cover the cost of the second prize.

Plank Center Student Paper Awards – The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations, housed at the University of Alabama, is sponsoring cash awards for the top three student papers – \$300 for first place, \$200 for second place, and \$100 for third place. Of the 29 papers submitted in the student category, 9 (42%) were accepted for presentation.

(10) In-Convention Research Activities

Research accounts for The PRD has seven forums focused on research. Due to the extra panel time slot we chose to dedicate one session to the top student papers (3). There are two panels dedicated to the top research papers – open (4) teaching (3) and student (3).

Top open research papers

1. Tweet or “Re-Tweet”? An Experiment of Message Type and Interactivity on Twitter - Zongchao Li and Cong Li, Miami
2. Crisis Communication and Organizational-Centered Situational Considerations for Management - Elizabeth Avery and Melissa Graham, Tennessee
3. Public Engagement with Companies on Social Network Sites: A Cross-Cultural Comparison of China and the United States - Linjuan Rita Men, Southern Methodist and Wanhsiu Sunny Tsai, Miami
4. Shifting, Broadening, and Diversifying: How Gay Pride Organizations are Shaping a Uniquely 21st Century Mission - Dean Mundy, Appalachian State

Top teaching research papers (please see section 13)

Top student research papers

1. Crisis Communication and the NBA Lockout: Exploring Reactions to Response Strategies in Sports Crisis - Melanie Formentin, Pennsylvania State
2. A Preliminary Study on the Impact of Social Identity on Crisis Attribution - Jonathan Borden, Florida
3. Social Media's Effect on Local Government Public Relations - Melissa Graham, Tennessee

Additionally we have a high-density section and two poster sessions covering a range of themes:

- (Int'l Comm & PR) Panel - Public Diplomacy Research in Journalism & Mass Communication: What We Can Contribute
- Poster themes
 - Activism & CSR (4)
 - International Public Relations (4)
 - Reputation & Crisis (5)
- High density session themes
 - Government & Public Affairs (3)
 - Public Relations Professional Issues (4)

- PR Research Issues (3)
- Poster themes
 - Public Relations & Social Media (4)
 - Public Relations History (4)
 - Media Relations (3)
 - Media Channels & Effects (4)
 - Relationships In Public Relations (4)
- S2S Theme
 - PR in Nonprofits and Higher Education (5)

(11) Out-of-Convention Research Activities

PRD has two refereed publications. Manuscripts for the *Journal of Public Relations Research* are vetted by electronic review through editor, Karen Miller Russell of the University of Georgia. Under the editorship Chuck Lubbers, University of South Dakota, PRD published 3 *Teaching Public Relations* (TPR) monographs since Summer 2011:

PRD members also regularly publish articles in the journals of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), National Communications Association (NCA), International Communications Association (ICA) and other organizations.

(12) Research Goals

PRD achieved three primary goals this year and is focusing on two more for next year.

- The division undertook a Delphi Study. Based on the results, one primary area the division will focus on is exploring additional publishing opportunities for PR scholars.
- Continued poster awards for best visual presentation to enhance the professionalism and underscore prestige of these presentations.
- Published one “Special Topic” issue in the *Journal of Public Relations Research* in each of the last two years, however, number of total issues has not increased. Nevertheless, page numbers were increased to accommodate additional research.

Research Goals for the Future:

- Continue have one additional special topic of *Journal of Public Relations Research*, in addition to the four standard issues.
- Explore opportunities to develop a new journal.

(13-15) Teaching

(13) In-Convention Teaching Activities

Teaching activities account for 28% of 2013 PRD conference programming covered by 5 sessions including:

Top teaching research papers (34% of the overall accepted papers)

1. The Infographics Assignment: A Qualitative Study of Students' and Professionals' Perspectives - Tiffany Gallicano, Oregon; Gee Ekachai, Marquette and Karen Freberg, Louisville
2. A Complexity Approach to Teaching Crisis Management: Crisis Event Simulation in the Public Relations Classroom - Julia Daisy Fraustino, Stephanie Madden and Brooke Fisher Liu, Maryland
3. Public Relations Students' Ethics: An Examination of Attitude and Intended Behaviors - Lori McKinnon and Jami Fullerton, Oklahoma State
4. Does A Professor's Gender and Professional Background Influence Students' Perceptions? - Richard D. Waters, San Francisco and Natalie Tindall, Georgia State

Additionally, the fourth paper is slotted in the teaching research session and a fifth paper is slotted as one of the poster presentations.

Our Pre-conference program, *2012 Commission on Public Relations Education Report: Standards for Public Relations Education for the Professional Master's Program in the United States*, is a dedicated teaching session and is expected to be well attended.

PRD co-sponsored the following teaching panels:

- (ADV-PR) Teaching IMC Within a Mass Communication Curriculum: Faculty Challenges and Rewards
- (PR-VC-Comm Tech) Public Relations, Visual Communication and Communication Technology Divisions
- (PR – Commission on the Status of Women) Gender Discrimination: What's the Cost? So What?

(14) Out-of-Convention Teaching Activities

Teaching Public Relations: PRD's TPR monographs emphasize the importance of teaching. *TPR* is an online, peer-reviewed, open-access journal.

SuPRStar Awards: The Public Relations Division seeks to honor out-of-convention activities of its members through the SuPRStar Awards program, for presentations, articles and other accomplishments in teaching in non-convention forums. The main goals of the teaching program are to help identify areas of teaching expertise in the division, thereby assisting members to increase their effectiveness in teaching.

(15) Teaching Goals

PRD has accomplished one major goal this year and is continuing with three others.

- Continued teaching-related co-sponsored panels for the 2013 conference (3), a dedicated research teaching paper session (1) and a pre-conference session (1) accounting for 28% of

our programming this year. Additional papers focused on teaching are included in some of the themed poster sessions.

- Secured additional funding for the third year of the Wilcox Awards, for top three teaching conference papers. Dennis Wilcox (PRD Division Head 1981) made additional funds available for the award in 2012, its second year. The funding levels are \$500 for Top Paper, \$300 for Second Place Paper, \$200 for Third Place Paper.
- PRD continued its strong leadership presence in the PRSA Learning to Teach initiative.
- PRD continued its strong leadership presence in the PRSA Certification in Education for Public Relations (CEPR) program.
- PRD has expanded its syllabus exchange program and its content is available on its redesigned Website.

Teaching Goals for the Future:

- Continue to enhance the PRD's SuPRstar program to document non-convention teaching activities.
- Increase submissions of teaching papers to the paper competition.
- Increase participation in the syllabus exchange.

(16-18) PF&R

Professional Freedom & Responsibility (PF&R) includes free expression; ethics; media criticism and accountability; racial, gender and cultural inclusiveness; and public service. PRD has a record of strength in ethics, accountability, inclusiveness and public service. PF&R activities account for 22% of 2013 PRD conference programming.

(16) In-Convention PF&R Activities

- Public Relations and History Divisions - Pathways to Public Relations Through History
- Public Relations and Media Ethics Divisions - Teaching Ethics in a Changing, Converged Media Climate

The PRD off-site luncheon has a PF&R focus. Edelman has not yet informed us of who this year's speaker will be but in the past the speaker has covered topics such as analytics, ethics, global PR, etc.

A continuing PF&R initiative is represented by the inclusion of our 2013 offsite visit to the Pentagon for a tour and a Q &A with Rear Admiral John Kirby, U.S. Navy's Chief of Information.

(17) Out-of-Convention PF&R Activities

- One benefit of the expanded newsletter is that each issue contains an interview with a PR industry leader such as Erik Deutsch, Richard Edelman, Sean Williams, etc., which provide insightful and current information useful to teachers and practitioners.

- **SuPRStar Awards:** The Public Relations Division seeks to honor out-of-convention activities of its members through the SuPRStar Awards program, for presentations, articles and other accomplishments in PF&R in non-convention forums. The main goal of the PF&R program is to recognize the leadership of PRD members in activities involving the five PF&R (professional freedom and responsibility) emphases: (1) free expression; (2) ethics; (3) media criticism and accountability; (4) racial, gender and cultural exclusiveness; and (5) public service. These awards typically emphasize PF&R issues related to internships and pro bono work.

(18) PF&R Goals

PRD will continue to work on two PF&R goals.

- Continue to provide offsite opportunities to interact with professionals as part of our convention programming.
- Continue in-depth interviews of industry professionals for the quarterly newsletter to make that information available to our membership.
- Increase applications to the SuPRStar Awards (6 in 2013 – a 200% increase).

PF&R Goals for the Future:

- Increase submissions of PF&R oriented papers to the open paper competition.
- The possible creation of a database of pro-bono projects completed by PRD members and their classes, to foster ideas for public service work (this goal was not accomplished in 2013).

(19) Communications

PRD has a useful listserv managed for more than a decade by Alan Freitag, University of North Carolina-Charlotte. All members of the PRD with valid email addresses have been added to the Listserv. New members are added each September.

PRD has a website hosted on the AEJMC website. Chris Perry of University of North Carolina, our new Webmaster, is in the process of increasing the user-friendliness of the site. The leadership is in the process of updating the leadership manual and will repost this to the website once it is completed.

We are developing a “How to Get Started in the PRD” handout for new members and especially for graduate students so they can get involved early on.

The PRD is working to increase its presence in social media. This year, PRD added a Pinterest group to its other SM outlets of FaceBook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Additionally, the SM committee has developed a SM posting calendar (something at least every two weeks) and rubrics for measuring the its success.

PRD has a newsletter that is edited by Emily Kinsky along with two additional PRD members who conduct interviews and contribute content. This expanded newsletter has received numerous compliments from the PRD membership - <http://www.aejmc.net/PR/news.html>.

The results from the Delphi Study will be shared on the PRD website.

Fundraising

The PRD has assembled a fundraising committee. Based on the results from the Delphi Study, the committee will seek out funding opportunities to support scholarships and travel, and perhaps journal development.