

Vice chair report, Public Address division
National Communication Association
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Submitted by Lester C. Olson
University of Pittsburgh

Acknowledgments and thanks

I would like to thank everyone who helped to review individual papers and panel proposals. Every reviewer ordinarily assessed approximately 7 to 9 submissions to the division—a time consuming and crucial part of the planning process. The following forty five individuals gave their time and expertise as reviewers for the division: Jennifer Abbott, Karrin Anderson, David Bailey, Moya Ball, Jennifer Biedendorf, Leslie Blythe, Stephen Browne, Lisa Burns, James Cherney, David Deifell, Stephen Depoe, Janis Edwards, Jeremy Engels, Sandra French, Sara Hayden, Amy Heyse, Lisa Hogan, Susan Schultz Huxman, Sheree Keith, Lisa Keränen, James Klump, Larry Lambert, Gordon Mitchell, Charles Morris, Catherine Morrison, Shawn Parry-Giles, Trevor Parry-Giles, Tracey Quigley, Nicholas Rangel, G. Mitch Reyes, Sandra Sarkela, Kristina Sheeler, Amy Slagell, Robert Terrill, Michael Tumolo, Jill Weber, Danielle Wiese, Susan Zaeske, Ronald Zboray, and Mary Zboray.

After the papers and panels were selected for the division, I approached NCA members to ask that they serve as respondents and/or chairs. My thanks for agreeing to serve the PAD division in those capacities goes to: Cecil Blake, Carolyn Calloway-Thomas, Leah Ceccarelli, Dana Cloud, Bonnie Dow, John Hatch, Diane S. Hope, Janis Edwards, Lisa Hogan, Susan Schultz Huxman, Lisa Keränen, Martin Medhurst, Gordon Mitchell, Charles Morris, Shawn Parry-Giles, Weiming Yao, Ron Zboray, Mary Zboray, and Mei Zhang.

Special thanks to Lisa Hogan, who helped me to navigate All Academic. Special thanks also to Susan Schultz Huxman, Trevor Parry-Giles, and Charles Morris III for additional reading above and beyond the rest.

Submission and session statistics

The Public Address Division received 100 submissions. This was an increase by 14 from last year, when there were a total of 86. Individual papers were three fourths of the total submissions, totaling 75 of the 100 (up 9 from last year). There were 25 panel submissions this year (up 5 from last year). So we had an overall submission increase from last year in both categories. This means that there were more than 300 assessments rendered by the reviewers as part of the division planning process.

The division accepted 18 of 25 panel proposals (72 percent). I constructed an additional 11 panels from the individual papers, ordinarily with four papers on each panel. We accepted 42 out of the 75 individual papers for the division's panels (56 percent). In addition, two competitive individual papers were submitted from the division for the speaker to speaker feature. So the acceptance rate appears to have been much lower than last year, when the vice-chair reported an "80 percent" acceptance rate in both categories.

We had a total of 31 slots. One was used for this business meeting, another to feature scholarship by the Marie Hochmuth award winner. Although I requested two additional panel slots for the division, my request was declined by the conference planners.

Awards

Paper submissions were assessed through All Academic. The competition was keen because there were approximately 35-40 papers eligible for each award. The reviewers' ratings resulted in ties for both of the division's awards, using both the raw scores and the z-scores (which are adjusted for reviewer rigor). So the top papers for both awards were reassessed by three additional experts from among the PAD officers. The two awards from the division are:

2007 Robert G. Gunderson Award (top student paper in public address)

J. David Cisneros, "'Bilingual in Name Only': Dissociation, Conspiracy Rhetoric, and the Campaign for California Proposition 227."

2007 Ernest G. Wraga – Barnet Baskerville Award (top contributed paper in public address)

Robin E. Jensen, "'For while my mother knows a lot, she won't tell me a thing': Ella Flag Young's Fragmented Rhetoric in Support of the Chicago Experiment."

Overall observations on conference planning

Most of my difficulties as planner arose from All Academic's system, which, while helpful in many particulars, is not without limitations. For example, my ability to send bulk mail ended once the list of panels was submitted to the planners, even though there are recurring questions after that time concerning how to upload replacement papers or how to access them to prepare responses to them. Earlier in the process, there should be more transparency and openness concerning the procedure for requesting and criteria for securing additional panel slots.

The submission process generally went well insofar as both individual papers and panels were concerned. I believe that a detailed online sample for each would be helpful to members. It might be a useful idea to put samples for panel submissions on the division web page.

PAD reviewers were almost all punctual and constructive with evaluations. Out of 45 reviewers, only one reviewer missed the deadline. I contacted every reviewer by email before the assessment process began to check email communication and make sure that I understood the roles that people were prepared to fulfill. I think this extra step helped a great deal, since I was able to detect communication problems and give people a little advance notice of materials to review. Please be aware that the All academic process requires that planners use the email contact information listed with NCA's directory.

Considerable time went into planning combinations of individual papers into coherent panels, because this entailed articulating themes, finding expert respondents, and moderators. When we try to help Charles Morris with this process next year, I would ask people to bear in mind that the reviews of the 100 submissions were only an initial step in getting the program ready. This explains why my deadline for reviews was earlier than some of the other divisions, since fully a three fourths of our submissions are individual papers.

Many heartfelt thanks to all who helped to make the division's program possible.