

SSCA President's Report
Executive Council Meeting
March 30, 2005
Baton Rouge, LA

STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT

I convened a Strategic Planning Retreat in Tallahassee, Florida on July 9-11, 2004, hosted on the Florida State University campus by Marilyn Young. Members present included: Terry M. Thibodeaux, President; Ken Cissna, Vice President; Charles Tardy, Vice President-Elect; Marilyn Young, Past President. Neither Executive Director Hal Fulmer nor Executive Director-elect Emmett Winn were able to attend.

Overview

President Thibodeaux convened a strategic planning workshop to follow up on items and issues raised at the Strategic Planning workshop of 2002 in Memphis, Tennessee, chaired by then-President Kate Hawkins. The sessions began on Friday evening, continued all day Saturday, and finished with a concluding session Sunday morning.

Agenda Items Discussed

The following action items were developed through discussion over the course of the weekend.

- 1. SSCA should resume publishing the organizational newsletter as soon as possible.** It was a strong consensus that this was an important communication link to members. While costs must be considered, publishing the newsletter online should be a cost-effective option to the traditional mailed newsletter, and should be considered.
- 2. Executive Council should consider funding creative formats and sessions for convention.** Institution of plenary speaker sessions into the convention was discussed as a potentially positive addition to the current convention format. Fund-raising efforts need to be developed to support this effort. Several other types of programs were discussed, targeting specific needs or issues. Among them were more Top Scholar/Speaker programs, creative formats, panels on tenure and promotion and other faculty issues, and writing/publishing workshops. For UHC, performance or exhibit panels might be appropriate for some student work, for instance Mass Communication and Performance Studies students.
- 3. Explore longer meeting slot or an additional meeting slot for Executive Committee meeting during NCA convention.** The consensus was for a two-hour meeting for officers to discuss issues before the business meeting. At the 2004 Chicago NCA convention, we procured two successive time slots, and the Executive Committee meeting for officers was seen as very productive. The Executive Director and President should contact NCA convention planners early each year to procure consecutive time slots—one for the Executive Committee and the other for the Executive Council meeting.
- 4. Explore possibility of link on NCA and SSCA web sites to provide various services to the SSCA membership.** At present Executive Director-elect Winn has begun updating the SSCA homepage. Creative and practical uses for the homepage should be considered and recommendations brought before the Executive Council as appropriate. NCA officials should be contacted to explore possibilities of making both the NCA and SSCA webpages more useful for SSCA members. For instance, allowing online member application/renewal for SSCA members on either webpage was discussed. Further discussion is needed as to the best practice for maintaining the association homepage.
- 5. Conduct Convention Participation Survey during Baton Rouge convention.** The purpose of such survey would be to evaluate and better understand members attitudes and needs regarding the annual conference.
- 6. Communicate “high priority” list to Resources Development Committee.** The members developed the following priorities: (1) Endow the existing association awards; (2) Develop a support fund for the Undergraduate Honors Conference, and (3) Develop a Speakers Fund to cover expenses for keynote speakers, plenary speakers, and other guest speakers at conferences. With other important issues confronting SSCA, this committee was not

presented with these priorities, but the consensus was that the committee should be re-formed for next year and given the priorities developed at the retreat.

7. Correct the awards lists to distinguish association awards from divisional awards. The list of awards has been revised to reflect where each award resides.

8. Consider the proposals by Taylor & Francis Publishing and EBSCO. These two proposals—for Taylor & Francis to publish the *Southern Communication Journal* and for EBSCO to include *SCJ* in its database, were discussed at the Executive Council meeting in Chicago. Both proposals will be discussed again at the Baton Rouge meeting, and put to a vote by the Executive Council. If either are approved by the EC, it(they) would be presented to the general membership at the Friday business meeting.

9. Consider new membership category: Adjunct Faculty. This change was seen as having a potentially large positive effect on association membership in the future, considering the large numbers of adjuncts employed in communication departments.

10. Consider voting for officers at annual convention rather than via mailed ballots. This came from a discussion of ways to increase member participation in elections. Recent elections have had low voter turnout.

CHICAGO NCA MEETINGS

Executive Committee Meeting

The officers met before the Executive Council (EC) meeting to plan and coordinate the meeting. The main topic of discussion was electronic publishing proposals from Taylor & Francis and EBSCO. Advantages and disadvantages of each were discussed. It was decided to open a discussion in EC regarding both proposals.

Executive Council Meeting

A main motion was passed to forward the discussion of the proposals from Taylor & Francis and EBSCO to be considered at the Baton Rouge meeting. In the meantime, the proposals will be made available to EC members in preparation for consideration of their adoption in Baton Rouge. Representatives of both organizations will be invited to address the EC during the meetings at the convention, before official consideration of adopting those proposals.

Respectfully submitted,
Terry M. Thibodeaux, Ph.D.