

The Association for Communication Administration (ACA)
Interest Group Business Meeting
Southern States Communication Association Annual Conference
Saturday 4/11/2026 4:15pm-5:30pm
East J Conference Room, Sheraton Birmingham Convention Center
Birmingham, Alabama

In attendance: Chris McCollough (Chair), Erin Ryan (Vice-Chair; Secretary), Cole Franklin (Vice-Chair elect), Jennifer Edwards, Wesley Buerkle

Session called to order at 4:20pm

Meeting Minutes:

- I. Approval of meeting minutes from 2025 business meeting (Erin moved, Cole 2nd; motion passed)
- II. Chair's Report (Chris McCollough)
 - a. Association updates
 - i. Bylaws and budget discussion/concerns at the administrative committee meeting; budget passed on voice vote; focus on sustainability and a \$10 increase in dues
 - ii. Using "DEI" has become problematic due to presidential EOs and state legislation; Constitutional Committee suggested an alternative & name change passed with 71% of the vote
 - b. Currently 74 members of the ACA IG (but this is probably outdated)
- III. Vice Chair's Report (Erin Ryan)
 - a. Erin stepped in as Vice Chair during the summer of 2025 & sent out the call for papers
 - b. We had a 30% increase in submissions this year (up from 2 to 6); many excellent panel proposals but we were only assigned one slot; Erin asked for another slot & was granted it, so we had 2 panel presentations this year plus the business meeting. The panels were well-attended and sparked many crucial conversations.
- IV. Officers for next year (Chris)
 - a. Chris rotating off & will be past-Chair
 - b. Erin moving up to Chair
 - c. Cole moving up to Vice-Chair
 - d. We need to elect a new Vice-Chair Elect & Secretary; Chris called for nominations

- i. Jennifer Edwards self-nominated for Vice-Chair Elect
 - ii. Wesley Buerkle self-nominated for Secretary (2 year term)
 - e. Chris called for a vote on these two positions; “yes” vote was unanimous
- V. Other Business
 - a. ACA Journal is actively seeking submissions (Jennifer Edwards)
 - i. They have catalogued all past issues & it’s now searchable
 - ii. There’s a call for papers on the website
 - iii. Perhaps ACA IG members want to work together to suggest a theme/topic & collaborate and submit? Erin will email the membership about this.
 - b. Cole asked whether we should spend some time brainstorming ideas for future panels/papers in case submissions are low again next year; what topics would we like to see covered? The group pitched the following ideas:
 - i. Communication Advisory Boards: how to put them together, what’s the ideal balance of industry/community/alumni
 - ii. Microcredentials: who is doing this? Are they enhancing or replacing our courses?
 - iii. VR use in COMM/JOUR
 - iv. 3 year accelerated programs: reimagining the college degree; are some of our campuses asking us to consider this?
 - v. Establishing the value of a COMM program on campus: strategically combat the notion that communication professionals don’t need college degrees; how to recontextualize the value of a communication degree
 - 1. What can we stop/start doing?
 - 2. What should this conversation/narrative focus on?
 - 3. Identify programs that do this really well; look for success stories
 - vi. High impact practices/applied practices in communication programs that aren’t “replacing” theory/research
 - vii. Industry partnerships: private/public, how are people managing these?
 - viii. Focus on Fundraising (when we were not trained to do this work)
 - ix. Managing up with Dean’s and beyond & how this is different when you’re a self-contained unit/college/school vs. a department in a college of Arts & Sciences (for example)
 - c. Should we partner with Instructional Design or Community College divisions to tackle some of these issues/topics?
 - d. How do we support each other?
 - i. Maybe we add an accountability session in next year’s business meeting & spend time talking about how we can better support our fellow chairs/administrators when we’re the “middle men” or organizers but have very little actual power on campus
 - ii. Like an ASJMC for SSCA

- iii. Building/incentivizing others to want to be a chair;
delegating/training/succession plans
- iv. How do we do more with less? (this might be an Applied Comm
partnership)
- v. The art of negotiation

Meeting adjourned at 5:19pm

Minutes taken by Erin Ryan