

SSCA Rhetoric & Public Affairs Business Meeting – Called to order 4:29 pm on Friday, April 5, 2024

Presiding over the meeting: Chair – Jonathan Edwards

## I. 2024 Convention Programming & Old Business

### a. Submissions

- a. How many paper submissions did the division or interest group receive?
  - i. 28 papers received
  - ii. 4 papers rejected
  - iii. 86% accepted
- b. How many panel submissions did the division or interest group receive?
  - i. 4 panels received
  - ii. 0 panels rejected
  - iii. 100% accepted
- c. How many roundtable submissions did the division or interest group receive?
  - i. 0
  - ii. 0
  - iii. n/a
- d. Discussion:
  - i. One member of the body noted that it feels like a smaller conference. Anecdotally – more people pre-registered for the conference. Discussion of whether eclipse traffic impacted attendance.

### b. Awards and recognitions

- a. Top (Faculty) Paper Award  
Terrell Dionne  
University of Arkansas  
“Imagining Settler Futures: Synecdoche in US Congressional Debates on the Buffalo Genocide.”
- b. Top Student Paper Award  
Josué Porrás-Fernández  
University of Arkansas  
“Conspiratorial Political Spectacle: Exploiting Immigrants to Personalize the Great Replacement Theory in Texas and Florida.”
- c. The top paper panel was Friday 10:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. in the room “Sea Biscuit.”

## II. New Business

- a. Business meeting modality & scheduling
  - i. Discussion of whether we could stagger meeting times for the business meetings. They all end up meeting at the same time. For 2025 meetings will likely be spread out more across the conference (Thursdays/mornings/etc.)

- ii. There was discussion of allowing for virtual/online business meetings, but that would require a constitutional amendment. R&PA discusses:
  - 1. One opinion (drawing from NCA), is that some business meeting activities require in-person meetings, but other parts of association membership (like voting), could be done online to allow for a larger participation in the processes.
  - 2. Another note from the Constitution Committee is that the organization provides a time for every division, but that doesn't mean that the business meeting must occur or that it must occur at the conference
  - 3. Some organizations give awards at business meetings and could shift that to panels.
  - 4. Some divisions cut the meetings to 45 minutes so that there could be two meetings in a time block
  - 5. Another concern is that dispersing business meetings across the schedule will cause conflicts with/between panels and meetings.
- b. Division merger discussion:
  - i. R&PA was approached by the American Society for the History of Rhetoric and Philosophy and Ethics of Communication to propose merging their two interest groups with us. Discussion:
    - 1. One member asked what problem would be solved by their joining our group, and whether the merger would result in the dissolution of the interest groups or whether we would need to cover all content
    - 2. We would not change our name
    - 3. Question of how many members are in ASHR & PEC
      - a. PEC – 99 members
      - b. ASHR – 169 members
    - 4. Discussion of how both organizations are part of RSA
    - 5. Note that interest groups get fewer slots than divisions and that division size determines number of program slots
    - 6. R&PA has 18 slots and used 12 this year.
    - 7. Suggestion that we tell each group that we could promise merged panels every year.
    - 8. Suggestion that representatives from each group meets to discuss possibilities
    - 9. Reminder to consider bylaws and rules for each group and to find more information before making a decision
    - 10. **Group decides that incoming vice chair (Baugh-Harris) will conversations with leadership from ASHR & PEC to explore possibilities of cooperative ventures.**
- c. Next Convention – Norfolk, VA
  - i. Theme is Anchors & Anchoring Communication
  - ii. Suggestions for division programming & the CFP:
    - 1. Fertile ground for abolition
    - 2. School integration & resistance

3. Metaphors of the sea
  4. Relating to anchors - Where does communication go?
    - a. How are we recruiting graduate students?
    - b. How are graduate students involved in R&PA?
    - c. What are our anchors for the future?
    - d. What centers us, what makes us who we are?
    - e. What conversations are grad students having?
    - f. How can we bring in other grad students from places with less grad student representation?
    - g. How can we expand hemispheric representation?
  5. “Anchors away” and the things that hold us back
  6. Presidential election post-mortems?
  7. If we’re not the “catchall” division, what specifically do we do? Who are we as rhetoric scholars? Who should we be?
- d. Election of officers:**
- i. Vice Chair Elect to program 2026 in Birmingham
    1. Andre Johnson nominated Lionnell Badu Smith
    2. Approved
  - ii. Re-nominating Matt Parnell as graduate student representative
    1. Approved
  - iii. Secretary Emily Kofoed
    1. Approved
  - iv. **Sommelier**
    1. Need
- e. Other business**
- i. Carole Blair thanks officers for their service and applause was given
  - ii. Reminder to submit for 2025 SSCA
- f. Adjourn**