

**Southern States Communication Association  
Frisco, Texas**

**Public Relations Division Business Meeting Minutes  
Saturday, April 6, 2024, 4:15-5:30 p.m.  
Room: Gallant Fox**

**Meeting Attendees:** Breann Murphy, Carrie Reif-Stice, Kelly Williams, Jessica Beckham, Corey Hickerson, Kim Keller, Tiffany McBride, Kate Stewart

- I. Meeting called to order by Carrie (Chair)
- II. Minutes from April 2023 meeting were approved by Corey and second by Kelly
- III. Discussed old business
  - a. Carrie has created a Google Drive for the PR division that contains agendas, past minutes from previous business meetings, and a volunteer list for reviewers/moderators/respondents
    - i. Carrie found the minutes from the 2018 and 2019 meetings and added them to the Google Drive
    - ii. This Google Drive will be shared with the current Chair and conference planner (Vice Chair) for each year
      1. The outgoing or Past Chair should make certain that the Google Drive is passed to the appropriate two individuals each year
      2. These individuals will be the only ones to have access to the username and password for the Google Drive as well
    - iii. Jessica will be sending a list of names of those who signed up to be reviewers from this past conference (2024) to Kelly for her to use for next year (2025)
    - iv. We need to consider creating a Social Media Chair or similar position who will help promote the conference and the division. Google Drive (username and password) could be shared with this person to access needed information for promotions.
- IV. Discussed new business
  - a. The division has returned to pre-pandemic numbers and in the next 5-10 years expects to see a 10-15% growth in membership
  - b. The PR division currently has 47 members, as of April 2024
    - i. We need to think of creative ways to engage new members and continue to grow the division membership (see other business down below for ideas)
  - c. Jessica provided an update on the planning for this year's 2024 conference
    - i. Hardest task or challenge was to recruit reviewers and respondents
  - d. Carrie provided a recap of the 2023 conference and reported on the 2024 conference
    - i. In 2023, the PR division had 12 submissions (usually see about 11-13 in previous years)
    - ii. In 2024, the PR division had 10 total submissions
      1. 5 papers, 4 of those were accepted
      2. 3 panels

3. 1 roundtable session
  4. There was a top faculty paper but no top student paper
  5. The division had 6 spots to use for conference planning
  6. Hope is to see more submissions in the future
- e. Elected officers for 2025
- i. Carrie Reif-Stice is moving to Past Chair
  - ii. Jessica Beckham will serve as Chair
  - iii. Kelly Williams will serve as Vice Chair
  - iv. Breann Murphy will serve as Vice-Chair Elect
    1. Nominated by Corey to move into the role
    2. Breann still assisted with notetaking for this year's business meeting and will serve in this role to help plan for Birmingham in 2026
  - v. Tiffany McBride will serve as Secretary
    1. Nominated by Kelly and Carrie
  - vi. All officers were approved by those in attendance and voted by acclamation
- V. Other business
- a. Planning for 2025 conference
    - i. We need to reach out to graduate programs (or graduate program directors) in Virginia (and near Norfolk) to submit to the division and/or attend the conference
    - ii. Carrie suggests rethinking the time of year we reach out to them. She had reached out in July 2023 for 2024 and had difficulty receiving a response. So, she suggests reaching out in early August might yield more responses.
    - iii. Carrie had reached out to 15 programs for 2024 in Frisco
    - iv. Jessica and Kelly can reach out to Corey for a list of programs in Virginia
    - v. Kelly is also familiar with the surrounding area for Norfolk to help assist with contacts and planning for 2025
  - b. Carrie led a revisit to discuss the idea about having a social media chair role
    - i. Carrie suggests adding a student to help with the social media or communication (like serving as a social media chair role)
    - ii. Kelly will work with one of her students to create a LinkedIn account for the division
    - iii. Jessica will send copies of photos taken at this year's business meeting to Carrie to have for LinkedIn
  - c. Discussed suggestions for recruiting respondents/reviewers
    - i. Jessica emailed out to division members for the 2024 conference
    - ii. Carrie had to reach out to others outside of the division
    - iii. A list of past reviewers will be kept in the Google Drive under the volunteer list
    - iv. Carrie has asked Kevin if he has any other names from previous archives
    - v. Jessica is sending the list of reviewers/respondents she has and also used for this year to Carrie to archive for next year
    - vi. We would like to see this list of names grow since we have 47 members

- vii. Kelly suggests sending out a survey to members to ask who would like to serve as a reviewer/respondent
    - d. Other ideas for Norfolk in 2025
      - i. For student involvement, Kelly suggests sending out information about the conference to graduate and undergraduate public relations programs at colleges and universities in Virginia.
      - ii. We could consider offering a special event for the division
        - 1. Suggestions include:
          - a. a social/mixer/dinner for members
          - b. offering a tour of a PR facility in the local area
          - c. offering a tour of a special venue in the local area (like the art museum)
- VI. Carrie motioned to close the meeting
  - a. Kelly second
  - b. Meeting adjourned