

Minutes of the Spring 2016 Board Meeting of the Communications Committee (“the Committee”)

Ongoing charge: To review and evaluate policies and procedures pertaining to all Society publications in both print and electronic forms; to oversee the website and to explore options for coordinating communications both in hardcopy and online; to review policies and procedures pertaining to *The Sigma Tau Delta Rectangle* and *The Sigma Tau Delta Review* writing awards; to accept applications for and recommend winners of the annual Outstanding Literary Arts Journal awards; to accept applications for and recommend winners of Chapter Blog or Website awards.

Board/Staff Members Present: Chair, Andrea Ivanov-Craig (Far Western Regent); Traci Thomas-Card (Alumni Representative); Tim Leonard (Student Advisor Senior); Amber Jurgenson (Southern SR); Shelley Romero (Midwestern SR); Carrie Fitzpatrick (President-Elect); Dan Colson (Managing Editor).

Old Business:

1. The Minutes of the Fall 2015 Meeting of the Communications Committee were approved;

New Business:

1. The Committee discussed the Outstanding Literary Arts Journal Awards. Results for the 2015-16 year were announced, which are contained in the Communications Committee formal written report to the Board filed in spring of 2016 before the Board Meeting. The Chair of the committee and facilitator shared some issues that occurred during the contest. The first issue is that the same participants enter the contest from year to year. To increase and vary submissions, the Chair recommended considering the requirement of Sigma Tau Delta involvement in the production of the journal. Should we eliminate the need for a printed statement indicating such involvement? Discussion ensued. The Chair called out the circumstances of many chapters, whereby the department or school has a literary arts journal in which Sigma Tau Delta is involved, but which, for whatever reasons, does not or cannot include a printed statement of involvement. Some reasons for this situation were discussed, including the journal receiving funding or support from other sources than Sigma Tau Delta or the involvement of non-members. Carrie Fitzpatrick suggested that we place a checkbox on the Annual Survey to the effect of “Does your chapter participate in the production of a literary arts journal which currently does not include a statement to that effect?” This would enable us to “fact find” and better determine what language on the current application might be made in order to encourage submissions from chapters who have not previously competed in this contest. The Committee then resolved to gather information from the surveys so altered, as well as to glean information based on submissions for the 2016-17 academic year, and then in Spring of 2017, to draft a motion (if need be) to alter the language on the application accordingly.
2. The Chair briefly shared other issues having to do with the Outstanding Literary Arts Awards. A tip sheet for better journal design, a policy regarding assessment of critical

entries including a new rubric for such, as well as providing the current rubric to contestants was suggested.

3. The Managing Editor briefly highlighted to the substance of his annual report to the Board. *The Sigma Tau Delta Review* receives a wide variety of submissions, but most of them tend towards the analysis of literature. *The Sigma Tau Delta Rectangle* might add a fourth category for drama submissions, which really poses only the problem of finding readers and additional budget monies, both issues the Editor thinks are not insurmountable. Some other items from the Fall Committee Minutes were addressed:
 - a. For instance, the need for a clarified acceptance policy is questionable. This was brought up last fall because of rumored perceptions that undergraduate students should not bother to submit because of undue competition from graduate student submissions. This is misguided and in any case, not really relevant since plenty of undergraduates continue to submit. In fact, overall submissions have increased, with graduate student submissions at about 10 to 15%.
 - b. The idea of creating an online graduate journal was clarified. Carrie Fitzpatrick explained that this suggestion came out of an idea to provide another venue for faculty serving Sigma Tau Delta to publish. Chiefly, these articles would be collaborations with undergraduates, particularly in the area of pedagogy. The motivation behind such a new journal would be to give Faculty Sponsors increased motivation to reap benefits for their already established service work with undergraduates or graduate students.
 - c. The Editor commented that he did not think it Sigma Tau Delta's main purpose to develop a new online graduate journal. The Committee agreed, commenting variously that it is the practice for graduate students to be encouraged to publish in journals which regularly publish advanced scholarship and scholarly work by faculty.
 - d. The suggestion for online journals other than the current pdf online was considered. It was decided that we are not ready to eliminate all print journals, but that doing so would eliminate shipping and postage costs, thereby freeing up monies for improved graphic design and artwork.
4. The meeting time allotted having expired, the Committee adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted, Andrea Ivanov-Craig, Chair of the Communications Committee