This report was prepared by Craig Hayden, ICOMM Section Chair

FULL REPORT

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Amelia Arsenault, Georgia State University (Section Program Chair 2016/17 & Section Chair 2017/18)
Babak Bahador, University of Canterbury (Past Section Chair 2015/16)
Craig Hayden, American University (Section Program Chair 2015/16 and Section Chair 2016/17)
Emily Metzgar, Indiana University, (2016-2018)
Shawn Powers, Georgia State University (2015 – 2017)
Efe Sevin, University of Fribourg (2016-2018)

BEST PAPER COMMITTEE
Senem Cevik, Ankara University
Rhys Crilley, University of Birmingham (Co-Chair)
Betty Hanson, University of Connecticut
Abby Jones, Philadelphia University (Co-Chair)
Philip Seib, University of Southern California
Will Youmans, George Washington University

BEST BOOK COMMITTEE
Giovanna Dell’Orto, University of Minnesota
Alister Miskimmon, Royal Holloway University
Ben O’Loughlin, Royal Holloway University
Gabriella Paar-Jakli, Kent State University
Laura Roselle, Elon University (Chair)

MEMBERSHIP
The section continues to support a membership that reflects a growing diversity of interdisciplinary international communication scholars from around the world within ISA. As of January 4, 2017, the section membership remains steady at 201. We project further growth in the future, as issues central to the work of the section’s scholars, such as strategic narratives, information media technology, and culture engagement become increasingly significant to research questions for the broader community of International Studies Association sections.
The section continued efforts begun in previous years to promote the growth of membership in the section:

1) Co-sponsorship of panels with other ISA sections;
2) A poster session at our annual reception;
3) The promotion of member scholarship through awards and through social media recognition;
4) Support for a co-sponsored Junior Scholar meeting (with the ISA STAIR section);
5) Further outreach to publishers and universities for section sponsorship.

ISA Annual Convention, Atlanta, GA 2016
The ISA 2016 Annual Convention was held in Atlanta, Georgia, March 15-19. ICOMM sponsored 32 panels and roundtables, with 11 sponsored independently, 18 sponsored with other divisions, two poster sessions and a Distinguished Scholar panel honoring the work of political communication scholar Robert Entman of George Washington University. The ICOMM Business Meeting and Reception took place on Thursday March 17, 2016. Routledge, Provalis Research and the USC School of Public Diplomacy were sponsors for the section reception. The business meeting agenda included recognition of the best paper award, the Distinguished Scholar recipient, and the transfer of section chair duties from Babak Bahador to Craig Hayden. Prior to the ISA convention, the ICOMM section held its first preconference on March 15th, 2016. The conference, titled “Communication, Peace and Security in the 21st Century,” featured four keynote speakers, two panel sessions (with three simultaneous panels in each), and one poster session.

ISA Annual Convention, Baltimore, MD, February 22-25, 2017
The ISA 2017 Annual Convention will take place in Baltimore, Maryland, USA, from February 22-25, 2017. ICOMM is sponsoring 34 panels and roundtables at ISA 2017. This includes: 8 panels sponsored independently, 24 panels co-sponsored with other divisions, one poster session, and a Distinguished Scholar panel honoring Professor Laura Roselle of Elon University. ICOMM 2017 section panels represent a wide range of interests and disciplinary perspectives. Common themes in our 2017 submissions included: public diplomacy, the geopolitics of new technologies, framing and agenda setting analysis, and the role of social media in advocacy and human rights promotion. In 2017, 165 participants submitted to the ICOMM division. Of these, 22 papers and one roundtable were ultimately not selected for the program by ICOMM or any other division.

Papers and panels were sponsored based primarily on their topical relevance to the division. To ensure a diversity of scholarship, panels were crafted to maintain a gender, geographic, and institutional balance. Similarly, ICOMM decided to co-sponsor panels that were topically relevant, provided opportunities to strengthen relationships with scholars working in other ISA divisions, and enhanced the visibility of ICOMM-related work at ISA. ICOMM worked in partnership to co-sponsor panels at ISA 2017 with 21 other sections, an indication of the importance of communication to international studies. These included (please note that some panels are sponsored by more than two sections):

1. Active Learning in International Affairs (2)
2. Comparative Interdisciplinary Studies (1)
3. Diplomatic Studies (3)
4. Environmental Studies (1)
5. Ethnicity, Nationalism, & Migration Studies (1)
6. Feminist Theory and Gender Studies (1)
7. Global Health (1)
8. Global Development (1)
9. Historical International Relations (1)
10. Human Rights (2)
11. International Ethics (1)
12. Intelligence Studies (2)
13. International Political Economy (2)
14. International Political Sociology (2)
15. International Security Studies (1)
16. Online Media Caucus (3)
17. Political Demography and Geography (1)
18. Post Communist Systems (1)
19. Science, Technology and Art in International Relations (16)
20. Theory (1)
21. Understanding Change in World Politics (Theme) (2)

2017 BUSINESS MEETING AND RECEPTION

The ICOMM Business Meeting and Reception is scheduled for Thursday, February 23, 2017 at 7:30pm. The reception will be sponsored by Routledge, Provalis Research, the USC Center for Public Diplomacy, and the George Washington University Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication. The meeting will review accomplishments and news for 2016/2017 and acknowledge winners of the best book award, best paper award and Distinguished Scholar. Election results for new Executive Board Members will be announced, as well as forthcoming Program and Section Chair positions. This event will be held concurrently with the ICOMM poster session, to highlight the work of emergent ICOMM scholars.

THE ICOMM DISTINGUISHED SCHOLAR AWARD

The 2017 Distinguished Scholar Award winner, selected through a vote of the Executive Committee, is Laura Roselle, of Elon University, in recognition of her significant contributions to the field of International Communication research and to the ISA. Professor Roselle will be honored at the ICOMM Distinguished Scholar Panel for her exceptional academic record in groundbreaking work on strategic narratives, in the best tradition of combining communication and International Relations scholarship. Her work has raised the visibility of the International communication field. She has also demonstrated significant service, through her editorship of the journal *Media, War and Conflict*, and as an editor of the Routledge book series “Global Information, Politics, and Society.” Professor Roselle will also be recognized at the ICOMM Section Reception and Business Meeting.
THE ICOMM BEST PAPER AWARD

Four nominations were received for the best paper award, which aims to select the best paper presented at an ICOMM panel during the 2016 annual conference. The winner of the award for 2017 is Efe Sevin (University of Fribourg, Department of Communication and Media Research) for his paper “Traditional Meets Digital: Diplomatic Processes on Social Media.” Looking at two data sets of relations among international actors and foreign policy leaders, the paper uses social network analysis methods to analyze relations that take place on digital platforms that approximate traditional diplomatic processes, yet may not necessarily yield influence. The paper illustrates interdisciplinary methods and perspectives, while making the case for more investigation of the digital diplomacy of middle powers.

THE ICOMM BEST BOOK AWARD

The ICOMM section selected a best book award winner in 2016/17, *The Real Cyber War: The Political Economy of Internet Freedom* (University of Illinois Press, 2015), by Shawn M. Powers (Georgia State University) and Michael Jablonski (Georgia State University).

*The Real Cyber War* examines the intersection of government intervention, corporate power, and technology through historical frameworks, legal analysis, and an incisive investigation of how states act to shape global information flows and the rules and values that sustain communication technology. The book award committee enthusiastically chose this book and argued it would have a significant and lasting impact on the study of international communication in the context of international relations. The committee noted the book’s strength in its contribution to theory building. The authors’ take was recognized as original, addressing how governments compete to influence policies about technologies, the technologies themselves, and the norms governing information. The impressive research with hard-to-obtain US government documents grounds the theoretical argument in empirical and practical bases that make it relevant to both scholars and practitioners of foreign policy.

SECTION COMMUNICATION

The ICOMM section uses a number of tools to communicate with members, including:

- The section listserve, which reaches most of the membership through a mass email. The list serve is regularly updated to add new members
- Through the ISA organization, which sends out mass emails to all current section members
- ICOMM’s Twitter handle: https://twitter.com/ISAICOMM
- ICOMM website: https://isaicomm.wordpress.com
- ICOMM’s newsletter Catalyst (published twice a year)

These communication tools are also available to section members who wish to send out important announcements related to the section and its members.

VIRTUAL MEETINGS

ICOMM’s Executive Committee met in person once at the 2016 ISA conference, held three phone conferences between the ISA annual conferences, and maintained contact email throughout the year.