



City of Tampa in full bloom. johnthoward1961/CC BY-SA 2.0

Stage set for exciting convention in Tampa

I am so ready to go to Tampa—and not just because of the wintery weather we are having here in Boone! Tampa is a great host city, and we have an exciting convention program planned! I look forward to visiting with you all as we celebrate and critique Communication as Art and Craft. I hope you are able to arrive by Wednesday to enjoy the attractions of Tampa, perhaps including a visit to Ybor City for dinner and a flamenco dance show at the Columbia restaurant, or dinner in Tampa at Bern’s restaurant, which is a standard on the list of top restaurants



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in the United States. Close to the hotel, you might enjoy cheering on a team at the women’s NCAA championship basketball game (Tuesday night), taking a stroll in the park, going for a ride on the eboats, visiting the aquarium,

or taking advantage of the many shopping and dining venues. We begin convention sessions on Thursday with a full day of interesting panels, including a workshop on the art and craft of communicating civility on college campuses, a town hall debate, a GIFTS session, top papers in applied communication, ethnography, interpersonal communication and political communication, a session on managing stress and burnout in administrative work, and the Southern colloquium on rhetoric. We continue the discussions and

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Ybor City - photo by Robert La Follette

conclude the day as we join together for our SSCA Welcome Reception on the beautiful outdoor terrace area of the Marriott Waterside.

Friday begins with our SSCA Breakfast and Business Meeting, followed by the VP spotlight program, featuring Devery Anderson, foremost researcher on Emmett Till, and author of *The Boy Who Never Died: The Saga of the Emmett Till Murder*. (For more information about the spotlight program, check out the convention program at ssca.net). The afternoon includes an abundance of engaging panels, including a Performance Studies panel on "(All But) Forgotten Crafts" and a Freedom of Speech sponsored discussion/debate among attorneys, journalists, and scholars about the ongoing issue of cameras in the courtrooms. Throughout the day on Friday and Saturday, we will be joined by our Clevenger Undergraduate Honors Conference participants. Special thanks to Roseann Mandziuk for her work in preparing a great CUHC program! As your schedule permits, please take some time to listen to the presentations by these undergraduate scholars. You and they will be enriched by your presence at their panels.

Great program choices abound on Saturday, including the Multimedia Production Showcase and a panel featuring Dr. Sandra Harper, President of McMurray University, who will talk about key issues facing administrators from the communication discipline. A highlight of this year's convention is the Keynote and Awards Luncheon, which promises to be enlightening and engaging. I am excited to announce that Dr. Carol Crown Ranta, folk art expert and First Tennessee Professor of Art History at the University of Memphis, will be our keynote speaker. Plan to reserve your luncheon ticket early, so you will be able to share in this special program.

After a fun time at the Osborn reception Saturday evening, we turn toward thoughts of the future, as Sunday's programs focus on topics such as health communication research in the 21st century, research in progress in communication theory, rhetorics of change in international contexts, the use of social media to promote campus events, and new directions for the art and craft of competitive debate. Another Sunday morning highlight is a program on gendered communi-

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cation at work in leadership, music, and social change in Jamaica. Midday Sunday, we leave our SSCA respite and return to our normal roles, maybe a little tired, but mainly invigorated and inspired. That's why I'm so ready for Tampa! I look forward to seeing you there! Let me know how I can be of assistance to you between now and then.

Member participation key to SSCA strategic planning

As is often the case at the end of a semester, I spent part of December recycling stacks of papers and trying to bring order to the chaos that is my office at the end of a term. Somehow, I retained enough energy to also bring order to the department office (one of the perks associated with being a department head!). Trying to find places to store things in closets that were full of items that we no longer use caused me to reflect on what has changed and what has not changed about delivering instruction and engaging in research. As I pondered what to do with overhead projectors and boxes of floppy disks, I wondered how the road ahead might unfold.

Much of our world appears timeless. Students continue to major in programs of study designed by the faculty. Scholars continue to examine how people perform and produce messages as well as explore the kinds of effects messages have on receivers. We continue to enact rituals such as graduation that celebrate academic accomplishments.

But the way we do our work is evolving at breakneck speed. We no longer measure the results of academic programs of study with a handful of easily measured outcomes such as course grades or student numbers (i.e., numbers of majors, number of graduates, etc.). We now assess the learning outcomes of most every activity that touches a student:



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advising, individual courses, major programs of study, the overall undergraduate/graduate experience, and job placement following graduation. Engaging in scholarship now often involves lengthy institutional review board training, constant updates in software and hardware, and specialized support staff to orchestrate the research process. Life in an academic program now centers on the race to the top as institutions seek to leapfrog each other in the quest for ratings in popular press publications. It's clear that we aren't in Kansas anymore.

The road ahead for individual faculty as well as communication programs will involve increasing levels of assessment, increasing emphasis on leveraging technology in the classroom, increasing emphasis on external funding, and increasing emphasis on scholarly activity. Just as the road ahead will continue to evolve, what SSCA members want from their association will change. For more than 80 years, SSCA has supported its members with opportunities to share their work and ex-

plore ideas for promoting communication education. The association has also provided members with a home base to develop and maintain professional and personal relationships. The association has served the needs of its members well.

The changing landscape ahead requires that we consider how the association can continue to meet the needs of both individual and institutional members. Our association will begin work this year on a new five year strategic plan that will provide an opportunity to envision the ways we need to grow to meet the future needs of the membership. All of the members of SSCA will have the opportunity to participate in this process. That process of growing SSCA cannot be divorced from the interests and concerns of the members. As the needs of members grow, we should seek to become an even more valuable resource for navigating the road ahead.

The 85th annual meeting of SSCA offers the opportunity to not only share our work but to consider our future. Jean DeHart has put together an exceptional convention program and Carl Cates has done his usual outstanding job of organizing the meeting. Thank you to all the division planners and panelists for their work. I look forward to seeing you in Tampa!

Future SSCA Convention Sites

2016
April 6 - April 9
Austin, Texas

2017
April 5 - April 9
Greenville, SC

2018
April 4 - April 8
Nashville, TN

Recruitment and appreciation from Immediate Past President

One of the key aspects of being Immediate Past President of SSCA is to help recruit future officers for the association. This responsibility can be daunting, but one is supported by the ideas and suggestions of the SSCA Nominating Committee—all of the immediate past chairs of divisions and interest groups that are likewise highly involved and care about the future of SSCA.

At our meeting in New Orleans, a good number of highly qualified and excellent people were suggested by this group, and more names were added by suggestions later. This process led to my having some wonderful conversations with so many people that have been essential to SSCA through the years, and who in the course of my own part in the association have



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become wonderful friends. It turned out that I rather treasured the opportunity to catch up with several of these, and get to know better several others. Our association has a true wealth of caring, concerned people who serve SSCA so well. Some, I'm sure, will be outstanding officers in the near future!

I am quite thrilled with the people who did agree to run for office as Vice

President-Elect and as one of our National Communication Association Legislative Assembly representatives. They are high-quality individuals and will serve us well.

Let me also say what an honor it was to serve as President of SSCA. I tried to measure up to those I have admired who came before me, and enjoyed facilitating communication both of our research and teaching but also our association-enhanced relationships and business. Thanks go, as well, to those many of you who have been so willing to help in various ways, and also ready with unexpected and out-of-the-blue compliments at times which no doubt provided even further motivation! I look forward to seeing all in Tampa in April.

CUHC excellence in 2015 and Austin excitement in 2016

As the 2015 convention in Tampa fast approaches, planning is underway for what will be the 75th undergraduate honors conference sponsored by our association. From among the 110 submissions received, 18 panels will feature the very best of our undergraduates' scholarly work. We certainly have a lot to celebrate as we mark this significant anniversary!

Each year, these Clevenger Undergraduate Honors Conference panels provide a chance for new scholars to mingle with veterans. The CUHC is an exciting opportunity to share



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ideas, to engage with our future generation of communication researchers, and to enjoy the energy and new insights that our undergraduate scholars bring to our convention. Please make sure as you plan your convention schedule to include attendance at these programs.

Looking forward to 2016, the conference in Austin promises to be exciting and provocative. As we meet on the shores of Lady Bird Lake, in the heart of LBJ's Texas Hill Country, it seems appropriate to reflect on the questions of social justice, civic responsibility, and caring that marked the Great Society. Consequently, the 2016 conference theme, "Communication and Conscience," will invite all of us to think about the significant intersections among our personal, political, intellectual, and pedagogical practices.

Plus, as Austin is my adopted hometown, I look forward to hosting all of you in my "backyard" and promise a set of special events that you will not want to miss!

For SSCA convention and hotel reservation information visit www.sscanet/convention.

Dorsey outlines plan for *SCJ* Special Issue



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The *Southern Communication Journal's* first Special Issue on "Family Communication and Health" will be guest edited by two distinguished health communication scholars, Dr. Joy Goldsmith (jvglidsmt@memphis.edu) and Dr. Elaine Wittenberg (elyles@coh.org). Their call for submissions is as follows:

Advances in healthcare over the next 20 years suggest that patients will have longer medical histories, more complex care management, increased care interventions, and multiple providers. As a result, families will be challenged by new issues arising from increased in-home patient care, management, talking about health, healthcare decisions, and information-seeking about disease and illness. Currently, one-third of the adult population provides family caregiving, and this number is expected to rise in

the next decade as the population becomes older and sicker.

The goal of this Special Issue is to provide a national forum to highlight communication scholarship, focusing on the role of families/the family caregiver and health. Theoretical frameworks from family or health communication as well as qualitative and mixed methodological approaches are encouraged. Research articles should focus on the role and influence of family caregiving/family communication and health as it impacts one of the following areas:

- Coping and social support within the family
- Family interactions with healthcare providers
- Family and health-related themes, portrayals in popular culture
- Disease-specific experiences of the patient's family role
- Campaigns targeting family health behaviors
- Family and patient education material (e.g., health literacy, cultural humility)
- Family narratives and health
- Use of technology within/with families to communicate about health

Two types of submissions are encouraged:

- Original research articles that are 5,000 words or less. This restriction is inclusive of the abstract, text of the document, references, footnotes, appendices, and the captions for tables and figures. Submissions must conform to the journal's specifications, with family communication and health as a focus.
- Original dissertation research produced by emerging scholars (current dissertation research, within two years of completion, for graduates of doctoral programs within the last two years). All recent graduates are encouraged to submit their dissertation work for publication. This submission type will follow the elements/restrictions of 5,000 words inclusive of the abstract, text of the document, references, footnotes, appendices, and the captions for tables and figures.

Manuscripts should be submitted electronically at

<https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rsjc>

Manuscript Submission Deadline: February, 2015

Print Publication Date: November, 2015

Making SSCA 'your' association

It's been a dreary winter in Kentucky, so I am more than ready to head to warm, sunny Tampa, Florida in April! I always tell my colleagues that Southern has the best convention cities, by far!

I hope you are ready to travel, too, and as you make your preparations, I encourage you to get more connected to YOUR ASSOCIATION! The easiest way? Through social media!

Facebook is easy to set up and simple to use! When you search for us, be sure to type in the full name – Southern States Communication Association. Our page will have the SSCA logo and a picture of the beautiful Marriott Waterside Hotel and Marina—our 2015 convention hotel in Tampa!

As we try to increase the social media presence of SSCA, please post YOUR comments or pictures, share YOUR research and teaching ideas, and start YOUR discussions on our Facebook page. Our goal is to build an online community where we can stay connected



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to friends and colleagues all year!

And don't forget...visit the Social Media table in the convention exhibit area where you can enter for an opportunity to win some great prizes. No

cost, no strings, no gimmicks—just the Southern way of saying "THANK YOU" for being a part of SSCA!

As always, I am interested in your ideas about membership and marketing SSCA, so please feel free to contact me. I appreciate your continued support and hope you enjoy The Southern Experience in Tampa and beyond!

CONVENTION PRE-REGISTRATION FORM
 85th SSCA Convention * Tampa, FL * April 8-12, 2015
 PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

New SSCA member or is this your first SSCA convention? Please let us know by checking here: ____ Newcomer (optional)

*Total Membership Fees and Dues from page 1			
*Convention Registration Fees Preregistration available until March 11	Pre-Registration	At Convention	Amount
Regular Members (Membership \$50: see back for info.)	\$45	\$55	
Student Members (Membership \$30: see back for info.)	\$25	\$30	
Non-members (No membership fee required)	\$65	\$80	
Life Member (Membership \$1,250: see back for info.)	\$0 (included)	\$0 (included)	
Patron Member (Membership \$190: see back for info.)	\$0 (included)	\$0 (included)	
Sustaining Member (Membership \$90: see back for info.)	\$0 (included)	\$0 (included)	
Emeritus Member (Emeritus Status req.: see back for info.)	\$0 (included)	\$0 (included)	
Special Events			
Awards Lunch (Saturday) Limited Availability. Check with Registration Workers. No sales after Friday noon.	\$30 per ticket	# of tickets	
Charitable Donations: Please consider giving an additional tax deductible contribution in support of one of the following			
Janice Hocker Rushing Early Career Research Award			
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Rose B. Johnson SCJ Article Award			
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Minority Recruitment & Retention Award			
Outreach Award			
Theodore Clevenger Jr. Undergraduate Honors Conference			
Grand Total (Total all amounts in the last column)			

Make check payable to SSCA for the total amount and return before March 23, 2015 to:

Dr. Carl M Cates
College of the Arts
Valdosta State University
1500 N. Patterson
Valdosta, GA 31698

To pay by credit card, contact Carl Cates at director@ssca.net or 229-333-5832

CARING CONNECTIONS

Pre-Convention Order Form



Your Name: _____

E-Mail: _____

Your University
Affiliation: _____

Number Purchased: _____ X \$5= \$ _____

Please make checks payable to Southern States
Communication Association

Please complete this order form and return it to Sherry G. Ford, Ph.D., Professor of Communication Studies, Station 6210, University of Montevallo Montevallo, AL 35115, with a check for your order. Caring Connections are \$5 each. You will receive a tax receipt via e-mail after the convention. Pre-convention orders must be received by March 26, 2015 in order to be processed and waiting for your honoree when s/he arrives at convention. You may purchase and deliver additional Caring Connections at convention. Please note that Caring Connections are distributed to convention attendees only. If you wish to honor someone not in attendance, you may mail the honor yourself.

Honoree's Name

Honoree's University Affiliation

SSCA DIVISIONS AND INTEREST GROUPS

SSCA DIVISIONS

- Applied Communication
- Communication Theory
- Community College
- Freedom of Speech
- Gender Studies
- Instructional Development
- Intercultural Communication
- Interpersonal Communication
- Language and Social Interaction
- Mass Communication
- Performance Studies
- Political Communication
- Popular Communication
- Public Relations
- Rhetoric and Public Address
- Southern Argumentation and Forensics

INTEREST GROUPS

- Association for Communication Administrators (ACA)
- American Society for the History of Rhetoric
- Ethnography
- Kenneth Burke Society
- Philosophy & Ethics of Communication



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