IEEE Newsletter PCS

IEEE Professional Communication Society Newsletter • ISSN 1539-3593 • Volume 50, Number 9 • September 2006

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by Muriel Zimmerman

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By Michael A. Stelzner

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Everywhere you look, a white paper is attempting to demonstrate thought leadership, describe how things work, and even establish a business case.

- **ABET**

Lessons Learned

I have to admit it. I couldn’t help myself. On June 24, with the help of the Dean’s administrative assistant, I transported three large boxes to the mailroom. One was addressed to the Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC), ABET, Inc., Baltimore, Maryland. Another was going to the engineering program evaluator team chair for our October 2006 site visit. The third was postmarked for the computer science program evaluator team chair. When I handed over these packages and... **Read more**.

- **Tools You Can Use**

Engineers and Writing – Oil and Water?

Want to get a laugh from technical communicators? Suggest that the engineers write the documentation for a product. But, the idea of engineers writing documentation won’t go away because it makes sense - the engineers know the product better than anyone. Plus, today, technologies, like wikis, support the engineers’ writing technical documentation. Unfortunately, they rarely want to. Almost every engineer I’ve known has bad memories of 9th grade English class....**Read more**

- **IPCC Registration**

Register Now for IPCC 2006!

Registration for IPCC 2006 in Saratoga Springs, NY is now available online! To register, visit the **conference web site**. Our keynote speaker will be Elliott Masie , an internationally known futurist, analyst, researcher, and humorist on the critical topics of technology, business, learning, and workplace productivity. Come join us for an exciting weekend of networking, learning, and fun!...**Read more.**

- **PCS Elections**

7 Candidates for PCS AdCom

Please review the candidate statements and the rules. Candidates are Aaron Benitez, Marj Davis, Mark Haselkorn, Walter Lee, Elizabeth Pass, Kirk St.Amant, and Michael Steehouder. You can vote online at **http://www.ieeepcs.org/voting/index.php**.

Read More.

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Feature

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Is there any profession other than engineering with so much concern for communication skills?

In 1901, the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education (SPEE) formed a Committee on Entrance Requirements to study ways to remedy the "deplorable" writing skills of engineering students. By 1913, technical communication faculty taught engineering English, and specialized textbooks were available. By the mid-1950s, nearly all engineering colleges in the U.S. offered a technical writing course (see T.C. Kynell for a detailed history of technical communication as an academic subject.)

Opportunities for Lifelong Learning

At present, technical writing instruction is available in some high schools, in many community colleges, and at freshman and advanced levels in most engineering colleges. Some colleges provide additional training for graduate students. A quarter-long technical writing course is required for all M.S. and Ph.D. students in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at University of California, Santa Barbara. A short course is required for graduate students at MIT who do not pass the extremely rigorous communication qualifying exam administered when they begin their studies.

Engineers have many opportunities to improve their communication skills after they leave university. Short courses in industry settings are well-attended, as are specialized workshops at professional conferences. Workshops and special sessions address popular topics such as improving oral presentation skills; writing winning proposals; preparing focused and effective e-mail; writing for journal publication; writing in virtual teams; and writing for the web.

Influence of ABET

ABET has been the recognized accreditor for college and university programs in applied science, computing, engineering, and technology for 70 years. ABET's influence on academic technical communication offerings has been consistent and strong. To comply with the most recent guidelines, effective for evaluations during the 2006-2007 accreditation cycle, an engineering technology program must demonstrate that graduates have an ability to communicate effectively. An academic program without explicit attention to communication skills will not achieve accreditation.

Importance of Writing Skills

The most effective engineer is typically a skilled communicator; communication skills are so essential to the work of engineering that writing often becomes a major part of any job. And engineers who become supervisors and managers

spend more and more time on communication tasks, reviewing and editing the writing of subordinates. It is through writing that funding is secured, research processes are managed, and new knowledge is shared with others. The audiences for writing become larger and more varied as technical work advances from initial idea to tested final concept or product.

As students—and later as working professionals--engineers can learn the basic principles of good technical communication, as well as the special features of technical style and technical formats. They can approach writing the way they approach other technical tasks: by understanding what information is required; by designing a product that will meet those requirements; and by building in product testing and quality assurance by way of collaboration and review.

Reference

- Teresa C. Kynell, Writing in a Milieu of Utility: The Move to Technical Communication in American Engineering Programs, 1850-1950, 2nd edition. Stamford, CT; Ablex, 2000.

Muriel Zimmerman is Senior Lecturer in Technical Communication at University of California, Santa Barbara, and Visiting Lecturer in Technical Communication at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She is a senior member of IEEE, serves as secretary of the PCS Administrative Committee, and is co-author (with James Paradis) of The MIT Guide to Science and Engineering Communication (MIT Press, 2002).

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Five Tips to Mastering Technical White Papers

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When a technical process must be presented to customers or internal teams, engineers often turn to the white paper as the tool. However, the term "white paper" is so prevalent it is often wrongly used to describe documents ranging from 1-page articles to 100-page reports.

Everywhere you look, a white paper is attempting to demonstrate thought leadership, describe how things work, and even establish a business case. Despite its ubiquitous nature, little has been written or published about white papers, resulting in much confusion.

White Papers Are Hot!

In 2001, a Google search on the phrase white papers returned a healthy 1 million responses. Only five years later, the same search resulted in more than 335 million listings!

This enormous growth demonstrates the popularity of white papers. If you or your company is not leveraging the power of these documents, you are missing an incredible opportunity. If you are using white papers, are they being read?

The following five tips will help you produce a compelling white paper.

TIP #1: Identify Your Ideal Reader

Are you writing to a project manager within your company, a prospective customer's chief technical officer, or an engineer? Identify your ideal reader with precision. Pinpointing the ideal reader will help you develop an outline, will mature your writing, and will guide discussions when things get off track.

Before you begin writing, ask the following questions:

- In what industry does this person work?
- What is the title of this person?
- How technical is the reader?
- What are his or her job responsibilities?
- How familiar is the topic to the ideal reader?

TIP #2: Discuss Problems Before Solutions

Your natural instinct might be to immediately begin writing about your product or process. However, think about your reader. Why should he or she give your document the time it demands? Are you addressing something your reader can immediately relate to?

Try starting with a discussion of problems or needs that currently exist when your solution is absent. Concentrating on your readers and their pain points is an excellent way to draw them into your white paper.

Why? First, people do not like to be sold to. Discussing challenges helps your white paper appear to be something useful. Secondly, if the reader can relate to the issues you identify in your white paper, they might think, "these guys understand what I am going through." The result is often greater credibility.

When talking about problems, think about how they impact people, processes, and quality.

TIP #3: You Only Have 3 Seconds. Use Them Wisely

Have you ever come across a white paper that bores you? Did you read the entire piece? The reality is that you have a lot less time to get your points across then you realize.

Readers generally live up to a marketing rule known as the "3-30-3 rule."

It goes like this. You have 3 seconds to draw in any given reader. If you tickle the interest of readers in the first 3 seconds, they will allocate another 30 seconds to read further. If your message is very relevant and interesting, the reader will spend 3 more minutes with your white paper.

The title takes up the first three seconds. The opening paragraphs occupy the next 30 seconds.

Thus, the first few words of your paper will make or break its success. Get to the point quickly and focus on the ideal reader. Remember that most people are skim readers. You can make the paper more readable by including many shorter subsections, callouts, tables and illustrations.

TIP #4: Get the Job Done by Writing One Page Each Day

Often white papers linger on the "to do" list or become a never-ending project. A simple, yet useful tip is to start with an outline. Clearly identify the unique sections of your white paper.

Proceed to write a single page per day. This is an achievable goal that can be performed in an hour or less. After a week or two, you will find yourself with a compete white paper.

Be sure to send your piece to a few peers for review before you submit it to your supervisors or to the outside world.

TIP #5: Conclude With a Call to Action

A well-written technical white paper will help demonstrate how a product or service addresses certain issues. Often, the result is a persuaded reader.

However, most white papers fall short of their ultimate goal because they lack an actionable concluding suggestion—known as a call to action—that can guide the reader toward the goal.

The call must be clear, provide an advantage for acting, and explicitly state how the reader should take the next step. Possible action suggestions include, but are not limited to, the following ideas:

- Scheduling an appointment
- Visiting a website
- Calling a sales representative
- Offering access to special content
- Providing a coupon or discount

Be sure to give your readers clear instructions on the very last line of your white paper.

Want to learn more? Visit **http://www.WritingWhitePapers.com** for extensive resources on crafting compelling technical white papers.

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Michael A. Stelzner *is the author of the new book* Writing White Papers: How to Capture Readers and Keep Them Engaged, *and has written nearly 100 white papers for companies such as Microsoft, Motorola and SAP. Copyright 2006, Michael A. Stelzner.*

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Feature

Top 10 Lessons I Learned as a Technical Communicator

by Rahul Prabhakar

When you are employed as a technical communicator, one of the strongest tools in your arsenal is words. Most writers today try to emphasize the right words to suit their audience type. However, how does one know with surety which words are 'right'?

Lesson 1: Choose the Right Words

To a large extent, the words you choose to communicate, determine the type of reaction from your audience. And, this does not apply just to articles, but also to other forms of communication - both written and oral, such as emails, end user documentation, and so on. Have you ever noticed how some of your mails receive an instant response, while others get dumped and probably never looked at? Did you ever wonder why this happens?

Readers today are smart. If you press them the wrong way, they will write you off before you know it. Therefore, remember the first lesson I learned as a technical communicator: choose the right words. If you are unable to capture the attention of your intended audience, nothing you write or say can bring them back.

Lesson 2: Develop a Rapport with Your Audience

The moment you surpass the word barrier, you have succeeded in developing a rapport with your audience. Your writing will seem more believable to them. Knowingly or otherwise, you have increased the universal appeal of your document.

Lesson 3: Pay Attention to Details

These days, technical communicators concentrate more on the two Ds: Deadlines and Deliverables. Their primary focus is to get the job finished as soon as possible. In the midst of the ordeal, they may not completely understand the domain, the technology, or the product suite. When dealing with complex products, this may not be the best approach. Paying attention to details is absolutely necessary in our profession. By hurrying through the product, you are depriving the end user of important information. My advice is: buy some time from the stakeholders. They will, under most circumstances, be willing to grant you those extra hours!

Lesson 4: Meet the Expectations

In a professional setting, you have to match the job expectations laid down by the people you work with or generally report to. Don't let these expectations take a toll on you. If you are someone who has not studied to become a technical communicator, you must take extra initiatives to learn the ropes. Don't be overwhelmed by the enormity of the task –

contact a local technical writing service provider (TWSP) in your region and join a technical writing course, or subscribe to mailing lists like TWI (**http://groups.yahoo.com/group/technical_writers_india**), and start networking. You will be amazed how much the world has to offer. So, the fourth lesson is: come prepared to handle the job expectations. Market yourself as a total package.

Lesson 5: Break the Mediocrity

Just look around. The world around you has changed so much. Most technical communicators today are moving up the value chain and taking greater roles and responsibilities. You, too, can taste success early in your career. All you must do is break the mediocrity. Go and explore the myriad options available on the Internet; learn everything it takes to accomplish the task, such as knowledge about open source tools, content management systems, XML, wikis, blogs, and so on. In other words, learn how to communicate and collaborate effectively. Move ahead of your times, and think laterally.

Lesson 6: Know Your Role Well

When I started writing as a career, no one was willing to train me on how to write. With no mentors in the industry, I was left to the dogs. Most organizations today have a tendency to do that. They expect you to know your role well, even if you are a fresher (beginner). That is not to say that you cannot learn the ropes on the job; you just need to show them what you are truly capable of. Demonstrate the values you carry each day at work, and make them realize that your services are indispensable. All this will require you to stretch your limits.

Rome was not built in a day, so accept rejections that might come in your way. Those are just normal, not deterrents. Exude a winning attitude at work…all the time!

Lesson 7: Steer Away from the Usual Rut

When you have some time to spare, you can build your skills by doing the following:

- Take on some projects voluntarily for your own learning.
- Network with fellow technical writers, developers, or other professionals.
- Participate on several technical writing forums
- Share your knowledge with the rest of the world
- Join the open source revolution. It’s free and worth its salt.
- Write articles for ezines such as this.
- Maintain a blog and write about new topics. You can include the blog address in your résumé.

Getting noticed is a matter of choice and individual capability. Luck has little or nothing to do with it. In short, try to break away from the monotony of a regular 9-to-5 job.

Lesson 8: Don’t Network for the Heck of It

If your job involves networking with various people, such as Subject Matter Experts, Product/ Project Managers, Developers, or Quality Assurance Professionals, you need to respect their time (as much as you’d want them to respect yours). Don’t be all over the place with your doubts and/ or questions. It will do you more harm than good. Check your facts beforehand. Do you really need their input? If you are in dire straits, do not hesitate to ask, especially when you do not

understand something. Have a set of ready reckoners and checklists for reference, such as editorial guidelines, style guides, and so on.

Lesson 9: Education is only a Catalyst

Technical writing is all about how you can understand and decipher technology for your end user. No education or personal coaching can teach you that. Education is only a catalyst; it is only meant to guide. I have seen quite a few people in this trade, who have absolutely no degrees to boast of, but who can write exceptionally well. Try to learn from such people, they have been there, done that. Follow your heart and enjoy the continuous learning.

Lesson 10: Don't Suppress the Writer in You

I can assure you of one thing. In our profession, you cannot possibly convince all, so don't even try. Some people will always find the ways and means to put you down; it's the way this world functions these days. I have noticed on a few mailing lists that some people can be unduly abrasive, undiplomatic, or demanding. Some emails that I've come across in recent times are heavily laced with sarcasm, which I found extremely unpalatable.

Why do some people fare poorly in the personality department? A strong technical writer who has the ability to convey information in a non-demanding and non-confrontational manner is imperative to the success of any technical publishing department. Is it time we start spending some time on how to carry ourselves publicly?

I suggest one should never give up the good work. We all choose a certain way to be in this world. Some of us are good at one thing, while completely miserable at others. We spend half our lives searching for everything RIGHT - the right education, the right job, the right friends, the right house, and so on. The truth is that there is no right or wrong; it's all a state of mind. You can choose to be a part of almost any and every system. The choice to be who you are rests with you, and no one else. Even if you choose to do things you are not very comfortable with, you cannot sustain it for long. Eventually, you will lose interest; that's basic human nature. It strictly applies to everything in life that we do.

As Judith Herr (an STC Associate Fellow and active member of the TWI list) says, "Exceptional writers – whether technical or creative – are those who grew up reading voraciously – all kinds of fiction and non-fiction by authors from around the world. And then, many of them traveled or lived away from their own homes for awhile. I recommend it to young people getting started – and, older folks like me too. We can learn the rules and do a good job – or we can be exceptional." (Judith's website is **http://home.comcast.net/~m.herr/**)

On the question of why I choose to be a writer, well, all I can say is because I was destined to be one. And you can't change your destiny, just as you can't fake life or death.

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Rahul Prabhakar *is a technical writer with Samsung Electronics Company, Limited in South Korea. He is a leading member of the technical writing community in India and has spearheaded many initiatives to elevate the profession in the Indian subcontinent. Rahul holds a B. Tech. in electrical engineering, and has worked as a technical writer for some of the world's leading technology industry companies, such as Oracle India Pvt. Ltd. He is the owner/ moderator of a technical writing discussion group called* ***Technical Writers India****.*

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Feature

"..., but Johnny can't write!"

by Raymond E. Floyd

One of the most discussed topics in Human Resources meetings, and in management training sessions concerning interviews and performance reviews, is the lack of communications skills in the new Associate and Baccalaureate level engineers. In most cases, the lack cited most frequently is in the inability of the graduate engineer to write even the most basic report. How can this be happening?

Communication Criteria in Accreditation

The criteria for accrediting engineering and engineering technology skills place emphasis on communication skills, as noted in Criteria 4, Communications:

> *"The communications content must develop the ability of graduates to:*
> *a. plan, organize, prepare, and deliver effective technical reports in written, oral, and other formats appropriate to the discipline and goals of the program.*
> *b. incorporate communications skills throughout the technical content of the program." (pg. 6)*

Therefore, it would seem logical to expect continuous improvements in the abilities demonstrated by new graduates. Unfortunately, this is not necessarily the case. What is the problem? Or, is it simply a perspective of management? Is too much being expected of these recent graduates in terms of oral and written communication? Should it be the responsibility of industry to provide training in communication for their newly degreed engineers?

Background

Let me examine this topic from my perspective, or perspectives, as an experienced member of industry, a professor, and a third term ABET/TAC team evaluator. Having been in industry for more than 40 years, I have had the opportunity to work with, for, and have work for me a number of professional engineers and programmers. From a degree standpoint, the range would be from the Baccalaureate to the PhD, and subject matter from Mechanical Engineering, to Computer Science, to Metallurgy, as well as many others covering topics one would expect to find in a research, product development, and manufacturing environment.

Given that large universe of engineers, I believe I would be hard-pressed to identify one in four as being a good

communicator, in both oral and written skills. If one were to remove those trained as technical writers, those non-native English language engineers, and some PhD people (I have wondered at times who wrote some PhD candidates' dissertations), that one in four may grow to one in five or even higher.

Part of the problem rests with industry, as employees complete assignments, write their reports, turn them in, and they are accepted. No feedback, no re-write, nothing to help the employee understand that "insure" and "ensure" mean two different things, that "it's" and "its" are different, and that "effect" and "affect" aren't interchangeable. It could be that the supervisor doesn't know the difference, but I would rather believe they have just grown tired of trying. That is a different problem that needs addressing, but not for now.

The employee needs feedback to build their understanding of proper word usage, grammar, and sentence structure. Without the feedback, the same mistakes, errors, and poor writing will continue – and it should not be permitted to continue. If the problem is associated with one or two members of the group, then mentoring can be used to provide the needed guidance. If it is a more general problem, it may be more appropriate to develop and complete remedial and advanced writing courses, and take the time to make sure the employees participate.

However, the problem can't be put entirely on industry, academia needs a little propping up too. Having been there and done that (an adjunct professor teaching graduate classes), I can see some of the practices that have been allowed to make both the professor and the student lazy, and, at the same time, detrimental to any better understanding of communication. For example, when was the last time a student had to write essay answers?

In reviewing tests from a great number of classes, I continue to see multiple choice, true/false, and fill-in the blank answer sheets for the student. I suppose the fill-in the blank could be considered a communication challenge, albeit more akin to a spelling bee. I understand that the professors are driven by less and less time to prepare classes, more students to supervise, greater pressure to publish, and continuing pressure to garner grant money for the College (all of which is part of the tenure game). Given such demands on one's time, it is easy to see that grading papers needs to be simple and done quickly. Eureka! Enter the multiple choice answer sheet with a template that can be placed over the sheet to immediately determine the grade. What could be easier or less time consuming?

My students once called me, "Dr. Oh by the way", a name brought about by my tendency of changing the rules of projects from week to week in the class. It brought the students an understanding of how things changed in the real world of products and public demands. They also were required to prepare a class project and write about their plan, what functions were planned, how it would be implemented, tested, and released. There were no tests, lists to be memorized and spewed back on an answer sheet, not even a single true/false question. Just a term paper. Their grade was a composite, 75% based on the paper content and 25% based on grammar, spelling, and punctuation. It was tough, but I still have students who thank me for that class.

The IEEE is working hard to get better communication skills into the graduating engineer, scientist, and other people who need better reading, presentation, and writing skills. The accreditation review can help schools spot where they need more emphasis, but it shouldn't have to.

- Make the students read.
- Challenge the student with oral presentations on what they have read.
- Make them write and then sell their propositions to their peers.

Our goal should be to remove the accreditation review for communication, because Johnny can read – and write.

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Raymond E. Floyd *is a Life member of IEEE and works at the Wood Group (**www.woodgroup.com**), an international energy services company, has taught engineering, and has participated as an evaluator on ABET/TAC teams.*

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President's Column

Racing into the Future

This is the theme for IPCC 2006 next month in Saratoga Springs, New York. It also is appropriate for describing the Professional Communication Society, and the task placed before us.

If you recall, my April 2006 column began reporting on the impact a change in the way indirect infrastructure allocations would have on the finances of the PCS. In brief, the new allocation introduces an additional ~$60K on the expense column starting in 2007, for which we have not budgeted a product or service to generate matching income. I continued in subsequent columns to mention the plan for societies most affected by this change to get together to discuss our collective futures. There was a lunchtime meeting at the TAB meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota, but the outcomes were inconclusive, and I was looking forward to a promised meeting in Piscataway later in the year, where facts and data would by then be made available, and options could be more fully discussed.

The date of the promised meeting has now been set:16 October . In addition, the presidents or their delegates from the most affected societies have recently been provided a report generated by IEEE volunteers and staff. The report presumes no change to the impending allocation algorithm or to the products and services that societies currently provide, and focuses on how the affected societies might become Councils, or merge, in order to remain viable. Financial estimates as to the overall savings with each option are provided (again, presuming no change to the allocation algorithm, and no change to current products and services from each society). The overriding theme is to ensure the products and services important to members of these current societies remain intact, even if the societies (as they exist today) have to restructure within IEEE.

The PCS AdCom has received the report, and is beginning to assess it. The AdCom meeting in Saratoga (21-22 October , just prior to the start of IPCC 2006) will primarily have the future of the PCS as the topic. The AdCom meeting will obviously occur after the 16 October meeting, so we should have all relevant facts and data before us by then, in order to make informed decisions.

To be clear, merging or morphing within IEEE is an option, but another is to develop additional product or services that could help cover the step-function algorithm increase. The AdCom has already discussed this some, with more discussion to occur. The bottom line is that the AdCom, at this point, is leaving all options open, and will make decisions based on all the facts and data it can determine, or be provided.

We are truly racing into the future, and some decisions will have to be made in the very near term. Again, the goal, no matter what, is to ensure continuity of the products and services that its members have wanted and will want, and have so far taken PCS into its 49th year.

As always, I appreciate feedback, and luke.maki@ieee.org is the best way to reach me.

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Luke Maki *is the current president of IEEE-PCS and works for The Boeing Company. With a physical residence in Pennsylvania, USA, he virtually resides 'online' as part of multiple distributed teams.*

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ABET

Lessons Learned

by Julia Williams

I have to admit it. I couldn't help myself.

On June 24, with the help of the Dean's administrative assistant, I transported three large boxes to the mailroom. One was addressed to the Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC), ABET, Inc., Baltimore, Maryland. Another was going to the engineering program evaluator team chair for our October 2006 site visit. The third was postmarked for the computer science program evaluator team chair. When I handed over these packages and saw them safely metered and tucked into their appropriate parcel bins, I couldn't help myself; I let out a loud "yippee" and offered up a little dance.

We were two weeks ahead of the July 7th deadline for delivering the ABET Self-Study reports, the reports all the engineering programs, as well as the computer science program, had been working on for over a year. Designated faculty in each program had written the report, revised, reviewed, and revised again, until they were satisfied with the document. Each document followed the Engineering Accreditation Criteria or the Computer Accreditation Criteria described in the ABET documentation. We had met all year together to discuss the report drafts, to share insights, and to review each other's work. Even the report covers reflected a coordinated effort, sharing a graphical design. So, on June 24, it seemed we had pulled it off, and it didn't even require the anticipated "all nighter!"

Since June, the elation many of us felt has faded. Here at Rose-Hulman, we are preparing for the arrival of our students and the start of fall classes. And while we have successfully cleared one hurdle in the ABET re-accreditation process, we have more work to do. Preparations are underway for the site visit in October.

These preparations include being assigned evaluators for each program. These evaluators are being nominated by the EAC/CAC, and their names are sent to us by the evaluation team chairs. We then review each evaluator to determine if there is a possible conflict of interest, for example, if the evaluator chosen is a research colleague of a faculty member in the program that will be evaluated. We are also gathering samples of student work for the required display; evaluators will use these samples to determine if each program is achieving the student learning outcomes defined in the Self-Study Reports.

We have reserved blocks of rooms at a local hotel to accommodate the evaluators (although we don't pay for those rooms, to avoid any appearance of impropriety), blocks of conference rooms on campus (to house displays and other materials), and blocks of time during the two-day site visit for evaluators to meet with students, faculty, and staff. In all, there is still more to do in order to be ready for our evaluators.

But even as we enter the last leg of our re-accreditation marathon, I see this experience in a different light than I did when I

last contributed to this column. So in that spirit, I am offering my own observations about what we have gained from our work.

Define Program Educational Objectives and the Program Outcomes

Writing the Self-Study Reports demonstrated both what we do and what we don't: The most challenging sections of the report deal with describing the Program Educational Objectives and the Program Outcomes. As you may recall, PEOs are the attributes that graduates of your program can demonstrate in the 3-5 years after graduation. POs are the attributes that students demonstrate at the time they graduate and reflect the culmination of the education they receive.

The process of writing these sections was difficult for some faculty for one or two reasons: either the faculty had not defined PEOs and/or POs for their program, or they had no clear process for collecting data and assessing student achievement. Faculty would not have seen this gap without going through the experience of writing the report.

Of course, there are those who would argue that defining and assessing objectives and outcomes is a waste of time, an obstacle to educating students and sending successful graduates into the workforce. I, however, disagree. Programs need to be accountable to students, alumni, employers, and a number of other constituencies. This method of accountability may not be perfect, but it is still useful if we are to show the world that we are doing what we say we do.

Learn About Other Programs

Writing the Self-Study Reports allowed faculty to learn what goes on in other programs: Rose-Hulman is a small institution (only 1800 undergraduate students), but even on our campus, it is difficult for a faculty member from mechanical engineering to see what happens in an electrical engineering classroom. Such siloing is often cited as a problem within engineering education, and it definitely contradicts the global trend toward interdisciplinary teams and collaborative work. In this regard, then, our ABET Supergroup, the group of faculty charged with writing the Self-Study Reports for their respective programs, gained a window on different classes and programs that they had never had before. I only wish that more faculty could look through that window.

Identify Future Direction

Writing the Self-Study Reports pointed us toward future directions. Now that we have documented what we did during the six-year cycle since our last re-accreditation visit, we are ready to head off in new directions for the next six years. We have the opportunity to review and revise our PEOs and POs, perhaps adding new attributes like "leadership" and "citizenship" that weren't part of our objectives and outcomes in the past. We also have the opportunity to try new ways to assess and evaluate student accomplishments. For instance, our efforts to document student learning for the previous cycle resulted in the development of the RosE Portfolio System, an online electronic portfolio used to collect student documents and evaluate them against a defined set of learning outcomes. Who knows what the next six-year cycle might bring?

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IEEE Newsletter PCS

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Tools You Can Use

Welcome to the IEEE-PCS News' new tools column that examines current and emerging tools for technical communication. (Ironically, the theme of this issue of IEEE-PCS News – teaching engineers to write – makes this first column the least tool-heavy that's ever likely to appear.)

Engineers and Writing – Oil and Water?

by neil Perlin

Want to get a laugh from technical communicators? Suggest that the engineers write the documentation for a product. But, the idea of engineers writing documentation won't go away because it makes sense - the engineers know the product better than anyone. Plus, today, technologies, like wikis, support the engineers' writing technical documentation.

Unfortunately, they rarely want to. Almost every engineer I've known has bad memories of 9th grade English class and can't imagine being a technical writer. But, if we can't get engineers to write documentation the way technical communicators would, it is possible to get engineers to write the things they do write better.

To accomplish this, the primary requirements are that the engineers have an attitude shift and learn some new skills. Only then do the tools come into the picture to support those changes. And while there are many technical communication tools, I suggest that there's one that's perfect for this job. It takes about five minutes to learn, it fits engineers' desire for tangible metrics, and it's free – Word's grammar checker.

Suggestions for Teaching Engineers to Write Better

In this section, I'll outline steps that I've found useful for changing engineers' attitudes about writing. First, two notes about the training environment:

- Management must actively support any writing improvement program. If it does not, the best writing improvement will fail.
- Writing training demands instructor-led classes that provide rigor and discipline. Otherwise, the engineers will always find something else more important to do and the training will fail.

And some instructional notes:

- Many engineers would rather be anywhere except a writing class. I find it useful to face this attitude at once by asking "How many of you don't want to be here?" Invariably, every hand goes up. It's crucial to start changing this attitude quickly. I do so by pointing out specific benefits to engineers – shorter, clearer instructions that reduce support calls and customer complaints.
- Many engineers view writing instructors as artsy types who can't get real jobs. I find it useful to emphasize my

technical credentials immediately in order to make the point that “I’m here to teach writing, but I’m also one of you.”

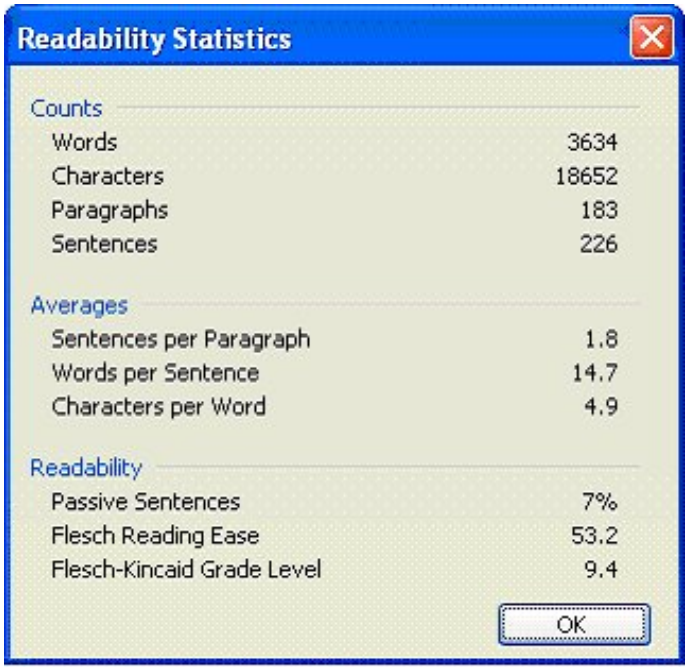
- Expect resistance to grammar and punctuation rules. One engineer in a course I taught muttered “what a load of crap” as I was describing the rules. In response, I simply pointed out that writing, like coding, has syntax rules that authors must follow to get good results. The class became more receptive after that.
- I also agree that some rules are arbitrary and that breaking them isn’t a sin – such as Star Trek’s promise “…to boldly go…” But before the engineers decide that this gives them license to break any rule, I point out that there are instances where rules are important, even for one character. I discuss the damage that results from omitting a comma in comma-delimited data, then segue to writing by asking if the engineers would rather meet a “man-eating shark” or a “man eating shark”.
- By now, the engineers will be starting to agree with the rationale for the course. I strengthen that agreement by noting that the course focuses on engineers’ needs and ignores writing’s more esoteric sides. I illustrate with the n-dash and m-dash, pointing out that the hyphen is a good substitute in engineering writing and easier to remember.
- Keep things light. I have teams compete to see who can write the shortest version of a paragraph. (One team cut a complex paragraph about networking to a two-word answer - “Beer good!” Not the best answer but they had the right spirit.) I have teams write instructions for making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, then have different teams follow other teams’ instructions. The exercise gets funny as teams harass each other. And, it lets me illustrate the importance of good writing.

All these ideas often work well because they’re being done in a controlled environment – the classroom. But when the engineers go back to work and lose the encouragement and rigor of the classroom, it’s easy for them to revert to their old bad habits. That’s where the tool comes in, as a way to support what they’ve learned about good writing.

The Tool

The tool is MS Word’s grammar checker. (My experience is that most engineers use MS Word.) When I state that the tool is a painless way to support what the class has covered, that I can explain how to use it in five minutes, and that it’s free, most engineers are receptive.

Here’s the dialog box for MS Word 2003’s Readability Statistics.



- To turn it on, select Tools > Options > Spelling & Grammar tab, then select the Check Grammar as You Type and Show Readability Statistics options.
- To customize the settings, click the Settings button and make the desired changes.
- To use it, select Tools/Spelling and Grammar or press F7 and run the spelling and grammar checker to the end of the document. At the end of the document, you'll see the Readability Statistics dialog box shown above.

The Counts and Averages are useful because shorter words, sentences, and paragraphs equal greater readability. More important, however, are the three Readability measures:

- Many people don't understand what passive voice is, so explain it by pointing out that it emphasizes the object of an action. In theory, this is fine but passive voice is often longer, wordier, and less clear than active voice, so the lower the Passive percentage, the better. The score of 7% in the figure above is passable.
- The Flesch Reading Ease scale rates text on a 100-point scale. (The Readability Scores topic in MS Word's help explains the scale.) The higher the score, the higher the readability. Most standard documents, according to MS Word's help, should score 60 to 70. (In one case this year, a client brought in a real document that scored a 0…) The score of 53.2 above is passable for a technical document, but could be better.
- The Flesch-Kinkaid Grade Level rates text on a school grade reading level. (The Readability Scores topic in MS Word's help explains the scale.) A lower score equals higher readability. The score of 9.4 above is passable, but often can be lowered.

Here are some points to emphasize to the engineers about the grammar checker:

- They should run the grammar checker on every document they produce in order to make its use habitual.
- None of the readability measures are perfect, but they do provide a baseline.
- Set formal targets for these three values to have a goal. I suggest that engineers aim for a Passive figure of 5% or lower, a Flesch Reading Ease of 50 or higher, and a Grade level of 10 or lower.
- They should run the grammar checker three times while creating a document – on the first draft, on the second draft, and on the final draft – and should see measurable improvement each time.

Conclusion

We'll never turn engineers into technical communicators. The personalities and skill sets in each field are too different. But we can help engineers write better. If we do, our jobs as technical communicators will be easier because we'll be getting higher quality first draft material. And, equally important, each side is likely to develop a more sympathetic view of the other side's work.

About the Author

Neil has 27 years experience in technical communication, with 21 in training, consulting, and development for various types of online formats and tools such as WinHelp, HTML Help, CE Help, JavaHelp, RoboHelp, and some now forgotten. Neil is a member of IEEE PCS, a columnist and frequent speaker for the STC, and the creator and manager of the Beyond the Bleeding Edge stem at the STC's annual conference.

Neil is a Madcap Certified Instructor for Flare, and a Macromedia-Certified Instructor for RoboHelp and Captivate. He provides training, consulting, and development for online help and documentation, Flare, RoboHelp, Captivate, XML, and single-sourcing through Hyper/Word Services of Tewksbury, MA. He can be reached at nperlin@concentric.net, www.hyperword.com.

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Editor's Column

Writing, Teaching, and Teaching Writing

by Kit brown

The theme this month is "Teaching Engineers to Write", and it must strike a chord with many people because I received a record number of submissions for feature articles. (Thanks to all who contributed!)

As a scientist turned technical communicator, I can empathize with the engineering students who would rather be designing, building, or taking something apart than writing about how they did it. Until I fell into the technical communication graduate program at Colorado State many moons ago, I had no idea what a technical writer was, let alone why the profession was important.

Many of my technical writing students were the same way. They had not yet realized the relevance of effective communication to their jobs as engineers, nor had they worked in the field long enough to realize just how much writing is involved in engineering--even when I brought in specification documents, annotated designs, and so on, to show them. (As an interesting aside, the English majors in my class had a much more difficult time with the class than did the technical majors.)

Yet, the number one skill that every manager wants in an employee is the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in written form.

After listening to Bill Horton today when he did a keynote speech for a local elearning conference, I'm convinced that we are losing engineering students (and others) because of the way we teach writing. We need to figure out ways to drive home the relevance, make classes more interactive and engaging, regardless of whether they are in person or online. Students coming in today are looking for something more than the lecture/listen/do projects style of teaching. We need to immerse them in an experiential learning environment that engages all their senses. As Neil suggests in his column, we need to relate grammar to something they can understand, like programming syntax or mathematical formulae. The possibilities are limited only by our imaginations (and the bureaucracies inherent in large learning institutions).

In addition, I think we need to start making a course in Logic and Critical Thinking a prerequisite to the Technical Writing course. Why? Because students today show an aptitude for finding information and accessing information in the online environment, but often have no clue how to evaluate it for veracity or validity. The ability to think critically and logically is a critical aspect to being able to write well.

Employers, too, must work with interns and young graduates to ensure that they see the context of what they are doing, and Raymond Floyd provides some suggestions.

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Reviews

Eats, Shoots and Leaves

By Kit Brown

Truss, Lynn. Eats, Shoots and Leaves. 2004.Gotham. ISBN: 1592400876.

This great little book actually makes grammar and punctuation fun by using humorous examples of poor grammar and punctuation, which shows how something a simple as a comma can completely change the meaning. The book cover shows a panda erasing the comma after "Eats", making the point that "eats shoots and leaves" and "eats, shoots, and leaves" mean two different things.

Other Interesting Books on Linguistics

by Kit Brown

Several interesting books have come out in the past few years that discuss the meanings and histories of obscure words. Some of them are quite funny in their approaches to what could be a rather dry topic, and are great for examples of potential localization gaffes.

For your favorite word lover:

- *Forgotten English.* By Jeffrey Kacirk. 1999. ISBN: 0688166369. Antiquated and obscure words whose meaning has shifted over the centuries. Great for the Shakespeare lover.
- *The Meaning of Tingo.* By Adam Jacot de Boinod. 2006. ISBN: 1594200866. A funny look at some of the untranslatable words and phrases found around the world. It is a miscellaneous collection of words in various languages that tickled the fancy of the author.
- *In Other Words.* By Simon Winchester and CJ Moore. 2004. ISBN: 0802714447. Another compilation of untranslatable words and phrases. Very funny. Gives you insight into cultures around the world by examining their word choices and metaphors.

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Tidbits

Editor's Note: I am always looking for strange, fun, or interesting technical communication tidbits. Please contribute freely.

Learn About Korean Culture

Contributed By Brenda Huettner

Yonsei University in Korea has a sort of online monthly newspaper. They've got some interesting articles on aspects of Korean culture

Read More: **http://annals.yonsei.ac.kr/news/read.php?idxno=361**.

From World Wide Words: Sic!

Paul Birch reports that the Vancouver Bach Choir recently performed Mozart's Requiem, conducted by Bernard Labadie. Concert goers were told about the event by e-mail, but the message must have been put through a spellchecker before being delivered: "Maestro Libido will conduct this outstanding choir, which has previously sung in London at St. Martini's-in-the-Field."

Leonard Blomstrand was startled by a headline on the BBC News Web site, "Tailoring lessons for every pupil". He commented that "The prospect of all children being taught how to make their own clothes made me sit up." **Read more**...

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About the Next Generation

From NAWBO News ONLINE 31 August 2006

The value (and eccentricities) of interns

Hiring interns is a great way for small businesses to get reasonably priced workers with creative insight and talent. But teens and twentysomethings can be the kind of employee that most bosses are not accustomed to, so it is important to take the good changes with the bad. Set restrictions on rules that should not be broken, but at the same time, be flexible with

others, and both parties will learn from the experience. **BusinessWeek** (8/25)

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Society News: PCS Events

Don't Forget to Register for IPCC 2006!

by IPCC Conference Committee

You can still register for IPCC 2006, which will be held in Saratoga Springs, NY from October 23 - 25!

To register, visit the conference web site at **http://www.ieeepcs.org/ipcc2006/registration.php**.

Come join us for an exciting three days of networking, learning, and fun!...**Read more** .

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Society News: Member News

Make Money with your IEEE membership!

by Brenda Huettner

As an IEEE member, you can earn $15 worth of products or services just by recruiting a friend to join as a higher-grade member (that is, not student or affiliate). You can use the money for IEEE products like pins or publications, or you can save it and use it toward your 2007 dues. The Member-Get-A-Member (MGM) program has been in place for a while, but this is a significant increase in the benefits to you, the current members. The MGM program has been one of our more successful recruitment programs.

Now is a particularly good time for recruiting new members. If they join between September 1st and the December 31st, they'll be enrolled through the end of 2007. That's like getting up to 4 months in 2006 for free!

Need more information on any membership question? You can always check out the IEEE site at **http://www.ieee.org/web/membership/home/index.html**, or contact PCS Membership Development volunteer Brenda Huettner at **bphuettner@ieee.org**.

IEEE Mentoring Program

Are you new to the field, and want some guidance from someone more experienced? Or, are you an experienced professional who would like to share your experiences and wisdom with someone else?

Check out the new IEEE mentoring program. This online program is designed to match IEEE members for the purpose of facilitating a mentoring partnership. IEEE is partnering with The Training Connection, a vendor that has developed a web-based mentoring program to facilitate the matching process. Participation in the program is voluntary and open to all higher-grade IEEE members above the grade of Student Member. For further information on the program, visit the IEEE Mentoring website at **http://www.ieee.org/mentoring**, or contact Cathy Downer at **c.downer@ieee.org**.

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Society: Non-Society Events

The following events are listed in chronological order with the earliest events first. This list is by no means exhaustive, but is intended to provide readers with information they may find helpful. It is updated each month.

GOLD Online Project Management Seminar 27 Sept. 2006 ***NEW!***

New Master's Programs at Illinois Institute of Technology ***NEW!***

Master's Course in User Support at University of Twente

IEEE International Conference on Web Services

IEEE SIMA 2006--Situation Management Workshop

IEEE Communications Society GLOBECOM 2006 Expo

Second International Joint Conferences on Computer, Information, and Systems Sciences, and Engineering (CISSE 2006)

IEEE Consumer Communications and Networking Conference (CCNC)

International Symposium on Integrated Network Management (IM 2007)

IEEE International Conference on Communications

Register for September Project Management Seminar

Title:	GOLD Project Management Online Seminar
Dates:	**27 September 2006**
Location:	Online

Register by 20 September 2006!!

If you want to use project management techniques to succeed at work, to accomplish more at home, or to make a greater contribution to your community, then the "10 Success Factors in Project Management" seminar could be for you.

The online seminar, takes place on 27 September at 9 a.m. EDT (13:00:00 UTC/GMT).

The seminar will describe the 10 critical factors of a project, its lifecycle, and how to apply project management to a variety of tasks. You'll also learn how to run effective meetings and produce useful reports. Host Margaretha Eriksson will draw on her diverse, 25-year experience with engineering projects and consulting to bring you first-hand knowledge, as well as personal anecdotes.

Registration ends 20 September. To register and for more details, visit **http://bmsmail3.ieee.org:80/u/3608/80318677**.

New Master's Programs at Illinois Institute of Technology

The Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Illinois Institute of Technology introduces three new professional Master's degree programs:

Master of Biomedical Imaging and Signals-addresses the interdisciplinary nature of the emerging biomedical engineering field with a targeted focus in medical imaging and biosignals.

Master of Power Engineering-provides concentrated training in the areas of power systems, power electronics, motor drives, and electric machines.

Master of VLSI and Microelectronics-offers specialized training in the areas of very large scale integrated-circuit technology, CAD design, and microelectronics with electronic systems design applications.

These programs can be completed without a thesis or comprehensive exam. The GRE is waived for applicants who hold a B. S. degree in a related field from a U.S. institution, completed with a minimum GPA of 3.0/4.0. Degree requirements for these programs can be completed online.

Learn more about electrical and computer engineering at IIT: visit **www.ece.iit.edu** or contact Catherine Kozuch/O'Brien, Graduate Program Coordinator, IIT Armour College of Engineering, **obrien@iit.edu**, phone: +1 312.567.3043.

To inquire or apply online: **www.grad.iit.edu**

Master's Course University of Twente in The Nederlands

Title:	Master's Course in User Support
Dates:	September 2006 to February 2007
Location:	University of Twente in The Nederlands

Members of IEEE-PCS, STIC, STC, and other INTECOM societies receive a €500 discount!

The University of Twente offers a unique opportunity for professionals in the user support field to get acquainted with the theory and research on user support. A distance learning course gives you an overview of recent and influential theories behind user instructions, manuals, help desks, and user groups. **Read more**...

2006 IEEE International Conference on Web Services

Title:	2006 IEEE International Conference on Web Services (ICWS 2006) Celebrating the 60th Anniversary of IEEE Computer Society!
Dates:	18-22 September 2006
Location:	Hyatt Regency at O'Hare Airport Chicago, Illinois USA
Conference Website:	**http://conferences.computer.org/icws/2006**

About ICWS

The 2006 IEEE International Conference on Web Services (ICWS 2006) will be part of the IEEE Computer Society Congress on Software Technology and Engineering Practice (CoSTEP), celebrating the 60th Anniversary of IEEE Computer Society!

ICWS has been a prime international forum for both researchers and industry practitioners to exchange the latest fundamental advances in the state of the art and practice of Web Services. ICWS also aims to identify emerging research topics and define the future of Web Services.

ICWS 2006 will be co-located with the 2006 IEEE International Conference on Services Computing (SCC 2006), the 30th Annual International Computer Software and Applications Conference (COMPSAC 2006), and the 2006 IEEE Workshops on Software Technology and Engineering Practice (STEP 2006). IEEE Services Oriented Architecture (SOA) Industry Summit and IEEE International Services Computing Contest will also be featured at this joint event.

The technical program will include refereed paper presentations, panels, and poster sessions in both research and industry tracks. Workshops and tutorials will run before and throughout the conference.

ICWS 2006 program seeks original, unpublished research papers reporting substantive new work in various aspects of Web services. Papers must properly cite related work and clearly indicate their contributions to the field of Web services. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Mathematical Foundations for Web Services Computing
- Web Services-based Service Oriented Architecture
- Web Services Modeling
- Web Services Standards and Implementation Technologies
- Web Services Specifications and Enhancements (e.g., UDDI, SOAP, WSDL)
- Web Services Discovery
- Web Services Composition and Integration
- Web Services Invocation

- QoS for Web Services (e.g., security, privacy, reliability, performance, fault tolerance, etc.)
- Web Services Assessment (i.e., validation & verification)
- Web Services-based Testing Methodologies
- Web Services-based Software Engineering
- Web Services-based Project Management
- Semantic Web Services
- IT Infrastructure Management for Web Services
- Solution Management for Web Services
- Multimedia Web Services
- Web Services-based Business Process Management
- Web Services-based Mobile Computing
- Web Services-based Grid Applications (e.g. OGSA)
- Domain Specific Web Services Applications and Solutions

IEEE SIMA 2006--Situation Management Workshop

Title:	SIMA 2006, 2nd IEEE Workshop on Situation Management
Dates:	24 October 2006
Location:	Washington, DC USA
URL:	**http://www.milcom.org/2005/**

This one-day workshop is being held in conjunction with MILCOM 2006.

Many domains, such as modern battlefield operations management, disaster response and crisis management, physical infrastructure and cyber security monitoring, and mobile/autonomic robotics, are characterized by heightened mobility, large numbers of distributed heterogeneous information sources, and existence of complex, often incomplete and unpredictable dynamic situations. As a result, there is need for effective methods of situation recognition, prediction, reasoning and control -- operations collectively identifiable as Situation Management.

Often situations involve a many interdependent dynamic objects that change their states in time and space, and engage each other into fairly complex relationships. From a management viewpoint, it is important to understand the situations in which these objects participate, to recognize emerging trends and potential threats, and to undertake required actions.

The objective of this workshop is to provide a forum for scientists, engineers, and decision makers from government, industry and academia to present the state of their research, development and systems needs in situation management, to discuss fundamental issues and problems, and to identify future R&D directions.

METM06 Mediterranean Editors' and Translators' Meeting

Title:	METM06 2nd Mediterranean Editors' and Translators' Meeting

Dates:	27-28 October 2006
Location:	Barcelona, Spain
URL:	**http://www.metmeetings.org/index.htm**

METM is a new association for those who facilitate international communication in the Euro-Mediterranean space. The scope of Mediterranean Editors and Translators (MET) extends to oral and audiovisual communication.

The theme for the 2006 conference is “International Communication—Promising Practices.”

Plenary speakers include Miguel Roig, author of online instructional material on ethical writing developed for the US Office of Research Integrity, and Chris Durban, currently president of the French national translators’ association, SFT.

MET has also announced a spring program of continuing professional development workshops for language facilitators

IEEE GLOBECOM 2006 Expo

Title:	IEEE GLOBECOM 2006 Expo
Dates:	27 November to 1 December 2006
Location:	San Francisco, CA USA
URL:	**http://www.ieee-globecom.org/2006/index.html**

The IEEE Communications Society (COMSOC) has selected San Francisco for its first ever Communications EXPO, which will be co-located its 49 th Annual IEEE Globecom conference in November 2006.

The new EXPO will have exhibits by industry and a quality technical program focused for the design and development engineers in the communications industry. This will include:

- Design & Developers Forum
- Tutorials & Workshops
- Telecom Business Forum

Historically, the IEEE Globecom conference is focused on research and development. The technical program for IEEE Globecom 2006 will continue this emphasis. There will be 16 symposium conducted by the various COMSOC technical committees covering the major industry technologies and numerous hot topics.

CISSE 2006

Title:	The Second International Joint Conferences on Computer, Information, and Systems Sciences, and Engineering (CISSE 2006)
Dates:	4-14 December 2006
Location:	Virtual Forum
URL:	**http://www.cisse2006online.org**

Proposal Submission deadline is **13 October 2006**!

CISSE 2006 provides a virtual forum for presenting and discussing the state-of the-art research on computers, information and systems sciences, and engineering. CISSE 2006 is the second conference of the CISSE series of e-conferences.

The CISSE 2006 virtual conference will be conducted through the Internet using web-conferencing tools, made available by the conference. Authors will be presenting their PowerPoint, audio, or video presentations using simple web-conferencing tools without the need for travel. Conference sessions will be broadcast to all the conference participants, where session participants can interact with the presenter during the presentation and (or) during the Q&A slot that follows the presentation. **This international conference will be held entirely online.** The accepted and presented papers will be made available after the conference both on a CD and as a book publication. Springer, the official publisher for CISSE, published the 2005 proceedings in 2 books.

Book 1: **http://www.cisse2006online.org/flyer1.pdf**
Book 2: **http://www.cisse2006online.org/flyer2.pdf**

Conference participants - authors, presenters and attendees - only need an internet connection and sound available on their computers to contribute and participate in this international ground-breaking conference. The online structure of this high-quality event will allow academic professionals and industry participants to contribute work and attend world-class technical presentations based on rigorously refereed submissions, live, without the need for investing significant travel funds or time out of the office.

Potential non-author conference attendees who cannot make the online conference dates are encouraged to register, as the entire joint conferences will be archived for future viewing.

IEEE Consumer Communications and Networking Conference (CCNC)

Title:	IEEE Consumer Communications and Networking Conference (CCNC)
Dates:	11 to 13 January 2007
Location:	Las Vegas, Nevada, USA
URL:	**http://www.ieee-ccnc.org/2007**

IEEE Consumer Communications and Networking Conference, sponsored by IEEE Communications Society, is a major annual international conference organized with the objective of bringing together researchers, developers, and practitioners from academia and industry working in all areas of consumer communications and networking. CCNC 2007 will present the latest developments and technical solutions in the areas of wireless, multimedia, and consumer networking, enabling technologies (such as middleware), and novel applications and services.

The conference will include a peer-reviewed program of technical sessions, special sessions, business application sessions, tutorials, and demonstration sessions. Authors are invited to submit complete unpublished papers, which are not under review in any other conference or journal.

Authors should submit a five-page technical paper manuscript (or a two-page demonstration summary) in double-column IEEE format including authors' names and affiliations, and a short abstract through EDAS, following the submission guidelines available on the CCNC2007 website. Only electronic submission will be accepted.

IM 2007

Title:	10th IFIP/IEEE International Symposium on Integrated Network Management (IM 2007)
Dates:	21-25 may 2007
Location:	Munich, Germany
URL:	**www.ieee-im.org**

Proposals are due **24 August 2006**!

The Tenth IFIP/IEEE International Symposium on Integrated Management (IM 2007) will be held 21-25 May 2007 in Munich, Germany. IM 2007 will present the latest technical advances in the area of management, operations and control of networks, networking services, networked applications, and distributed systems. Held in odd-numbered years since 1989 and taking turns with its sibling conference NOMS, IM 2007 will build on the successes of its predecessors and serve as the primary forum for exchange among the research, standards, vendor and user communities in the field of integrated management. The symposium is sponsored by the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP) Working Group 6.6 on Management of Networks and Distributed Systems, and by the IEEE Communications Society Technical Committee on Network Operations and Management (CNOM).

Integrated management of networked systems is facing new challenges, stemming from a combination of rapidly evolving technologies and an increased scrutiny from corporate customers. At the same time, as IT and network services become more and more ubiquitous, their reliability and performance become more critical for all kinds of enterprises. The resulting demands for improving and verifying service quality must be met in an environment of increasingly distributed and decentralized service provisioning, accelerated service lifecycles, and unprecedented security challenges. Today's IT management issues involve many diverse problems in controlling heterogeneous IT infrastructures, often across organizational boundaries. However, new and difficult challenges are emerging while aligning technical and organizational IT management to business requirements, thus calling for integrating management tools and measures "from bits to business value".

IM 2007 will be organized into technical and application sessions, panels, tutorials and workshops. In addition, it will feature an industrial experience track to share practical lessons learned by the user and vendor communities, posters, birds-of-a-feather sessions, and vendor exhibits. In the tradition of previous events, we strive to make the IM 2007 Symposium the highest quality professional event of the year. Paper submissions will undergo a stringent review process implemented by the Technical Program Committee, which includes the most respected experts in the field. We encourage papers that break new ground or present insightful results based on experience with integrated management of networks, systems, applications and services.

IEEE International Conference on Communications

Title:	IEEE ICC
Dates:	24-28 June 2007
Location:	Glasgow, Scotland UK
URL:	**http://www.ieee-icc.org/2007/**

Proposals due **15 September 2006**.

The Conference addresses key themes on "Smart Communications Technologies for Tomorrow". The program will feature a General Conference, 10 Specific Symposia, Applications Sessions, and Tutorials. Prospective authors are invited to submit original technical papers for oral or poster presentations at ICC 2007 and publication in the Conference Proceedings. (IEEE Communications Society policy states that all accepted ICC 2007 technical presenters must register at the full or limited rate. For authors presenting multiple papers, one full or limited registration is valid up to three papers).

IEEE Newsletter PCS

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Calls for Articles/Proposals/Volunteers

PCS Needs a Webmaster

Today's Engineer

***Global Talk* newsletter**

Seeking an IEEE-PCS Webmaster

If you are interested, and have the required skills and experience, consider applying to become the next PCS Webmaster. PCS is in the process now of revamping both its web site (**www.ieeepcs.org**) and its electronic communication forum, PECom (**https://www.ieeecommunities.org/ieee.pcs**). We're looking for a new volunteer webmaster to help improve the quality of both so that they become more useful, engaging electronic resources. The Webmaster is automatically a member (and a very valued one!) of the PCS Electronic Information Committee.

As PCS Webmaster, you would contribute to the redesign of the site and forum, and after that process is completed, you would continue to maintain both. The details of all the position's duties as well as experience and skills required to be eligible for it are listed below. Applications will be accepted and reviewed until the position is filled.

If you have questions, contact **Brian Still**, PCS Electronic Information Committee Chair.

Webmaster Position Qualifications

Position Title:	Webmaster
Position Closing Date:	Open until filled
Pay:	N/A (volunteer part-time position)
PCS Membership Required:	Not to apply but must be IEEE PCS student or full member to hold the position

Position Duties:

Responsible for performing day-to-day site maintenance on IEEE-PCS website, ensuring navigation and browser compatibility, providing as-needed consultation or programming for other PCS electronic information projects (i.e., Newsletter, IPCC), and maintaining and developing small web applications. Additional responsibilities include writing maintainable code, serving on the EIC committee, assisting in the development of updated layouts, updating all site content,

and advising PCS on how to best optimize its content for online deployment.

Required Skills/Experience:

- 2+ years HTML and CSS hand-coding experience (i.e., coding without the aid of an HTML WYSIWYG editor program).
- 2+ years Dreamweaver experience (including the ability to create and edit Dreamweaver templates).
- 2+ years experience using PHP/MySQL to create, deploy and maintain database-driven applications.
- Thorough knowledge of browser compatibility issues, image conversion for online use, and W3C accessibility guidelines.
- Basic familiarity with image editing applications such as Fireworks or Photoshop.
- Willingness and availability to post reasonable content additions or changes to the IEEE PCS Web site in less than 72 hours.
- Active interest in IEEE and the Professional Communication field.

How to Apply:

If you are interested and possess the required skills and experience above, please send an email to **Brian Still**, Electronic Information Committee Chair.

The email should include a brief statement of interest and an attached resume/vita. URLs of web sites previously designed and deployed also would be helpful.

IEEE-USA Seeks Articles for *Today's Engineer*

by George McClure

PCS has members who write clearly and well on various topics. We are looking for authors who would be willing to offer articles (750 to 1500 words) on writing tips, presentations, organizing proposals - even recasting résumés - or other topics that would be welcomed by our 16,000+ monthly readers.

Technology topics can be made interesting, too.

Contact: George McClure at **g.mcclure@ieee.org**.

Global Talk Newsletter Seeking Contributions

by Kirk St. Amant

Global Talk, the online newsletter for the International Technical Communication Special Interest Group (SIG) of the Society for Technical Communication (STC), is getting ready for a new year of publishing articles on topics on international and intercultural technical communication.

For this reason, I'd like to extend an open invitation to everyone on this list to consider submitting an article (750-1,500 words) on topics that include the following:

- Translation
- Localization
- International Technical Communication
- Outsourcing
- International Market or Technology Trends that Will Affect Business and Technical Communication Practices
- International Standards
- Differing International Legal Requirements
- Any other topics you think might be of interest to SIG members or to STC members overall

Please think of *Global Talk* as a forum for sharing information and ideas with both colleagues who are interested in international technical communication and technical communicators or businesspeople in general who are searching for more information on international communication. Also, please feel free to share this call for articles with colleagues (or students) who you think might be interested in writing one or more articles for the newsletter.

If you would like to discuss article ideas or to submit an article manuscript for publication consideration, please feel free to email me (Kirk St.Amant) at **kirk.st-amant@ttu.edu**.

IEEE Newsletter PCS

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Society News: AdCom News

PCS AdCom Elections

By Helen Grady

The Professional Communication Society Administrative Committee consists of 18 members, each elected to three-year terms. Each year, six members are elected, three by the members of the society at large, and three others elected by the current AdCom.

AdCom members are volunteers who work to ensure that our society serves its members, the IEEE, and the field of technical and professional communication. See below for information about the candidates.

Members of PCS should cast their votes for the candidates of their choice by **1 October 2006** at **http://www.ieeepcs.org/voting/index.php**.

The following people have been nominated for the Advisory Committee (AdCom). Each of the candidates was asked to respond to a set of questions. The candidates are listed alphabetically by last name. To view their candidate responses, click their name or scroll to the bottom of the article.

- **Aaron Benitez**, IEEE Region 9, Mexico
- **Marjorie Davis**, Mercer University, School of Engineering
- **Mark Haselkorn**, University of Washington
- **Walter Lee**, T-Alpha Networks
- **Elizabeth Pass**, James Madison University
- **Kirk St. Amant**, Texas Tech University
- **Michaël Steehouder**, University of Twente, The Netherlands

Please review their statements and then vote for the three candidates you would like to represent you this year. Ballots are due via email to **Helen Grady** (grady UNDERSCORE h AT Mercer DOT edu; note: replace the words UNDERSCORE with _, AT with @, and DOT with .) or via online voting by **1 October 2006**. Click **http://www.ieeepcs.org/voting/index.php** to vote online.

Here are the IEEE-PCS bylaws pertaining to election rules:

“Each year, six AdCom member-at-large seats shall be filled by election as follows.
Three seats shall be filled by election by current members of the Society in good standing from among the slate presented by the nominating committee. That election shall be conducted prior to the fall AdCom meeting in the manner prescribed by the nominating committee. The three candidates receiving the greatest number of votes in the balloting shall be declared

elected. In case of a tie, the winner(s) shall be selected by lot from among the candidates receiving an equal number of votes.

The other three seats shall be filled by election by the current members-at-large of the AdCom from among the names remaining on the slate presented by the nominating committee. This election shall take place at the fall AdCom meeting. Only members-at-large are eligible to cast votes in the election of these three members-at-large."

****

Aaron Benitez, IEEE Region 9 Committee

1. Who are you and what do you do in your career?

I got my University degree a couple of years ago, and I am about to start the MBA Information Technology Management Program at Universidad de Las Americas, in Puebla, Mexico (UDLA) to become a consultant. My background is in electronics engineering, and I have worked for Red Uno, a telecom subsidiary of Telmex, Mexico's largest carrier. I am skilled in electronics digital design, web programming, and operating systems (Linux, Windows, CISCO IOS, etc.).

2. What contributions have you made previously to IEEE and particularly to PCS through your volunteer activities?

I founded the Student Branch at my local University, which won several international student prizes for its performance during my term. When I graduated, I was invited by the IEEE Latin America Director to be in charge of an Ad Hoc Committee in IEEE Region 9. From there, I have also volunteered with the Student Activities Committee as a webmaster and assistant, and with the Regional Communications Committee as a staff member and columnist. I have attended and organized several IEEE meetings, the last one being the IEEE R9 Meeting in Rio de Janeiro in February 2006. I am currently part of the Organizing Committee of the R9 Student Branch Congress, which will take place in Acapulco in October this year.

3. What other professional organizations do you belong to, and what are your past and present volunteer activities with them?

I have a Global Membership in the Internet Society, and before volunteering "full time" for the IEEE, I got involved in some Chapter activities of the ISOC in Mexico, and helped coordinate a few virtual international meetings.

4. What specific contributions do you think that you could make if elected to the PCS AdCom?

As a Region 9 insider, I think I can promote the IEEE-PCS to the right people. Unfortunately, the Professional Communication Society is not well known, and in some cases is not known at all, in Latin America. My involvement in many of the events that the R9 organizes can help boost the membership and interest for the IEEE-PCS publications, activities, and events. I am used to public speaking, deadlines, and in general, all the issues around a big organization, so I am sure I can deal with any given assignment in the PCS AdCom.

5. How many meetings will you attend each year?

I am willing to attend all of them.

6. What is your current IEEE membership grade?

I am an IEEE GOLD Member.

****

Marjorie T. Davis, Mercer University

1. Who are you and what do you do in your career?

I am professor and founding chair of technical communication at Mercer University, Macon and Atlanta, GA. During my tenure, both the BS and the MS degree programs were instituted.

2. What contributions have you made previously to IEEE and particularly to PCS through your volunteer activities?

I served as General Chair of the Limerick conference, IPCC 2005, receiving the Emily K. Schlesinger Award. I am a Senior Member of IEEE, have served on the ad hoc Accreditation Committee of PCS, and am a frequent presenter at IPCCs. I currently chair the Ad Hoc Committee on Operations Planning for PCS.

3. What other professional organizations do you belong to, and what are your past and present volunteer activities with them?

- Associate Fellow, Society for Technical Communication (STC); Jay R. Gould award; Frank R. Smith Distinguished Article award; winner of 2 chapter Distinguished Service awards
- American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE)
- Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW)
- Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication (CPTSC)

4. What specific contributions do you think that you could make if elected to the PCS AdCom?

I would like to continue my service on PCS AdCom, to participate in meeting challenges and creating opportunities for success of this important organization. I'd like to see us strengthen our Division VI and broader IEEE alliances to increase PCS visibility and enhance services to members. I am committed to increasing our services to engineers, as well as to technical communicators.

The Professional Communication Society is unique among organizations serving professional communicators. Its parent organization, IEEE, aligns us with engineering colleagues and provides benefits of a strong international organization. Just in the last decade, business practices have become even more reliant upon effective communication skills in a truly global community. Being partners with engineers in IEEE PCS is good for technical communication educators and good for all those who practice technical & professional communication.

5. How many meetings will you attend each year?

I will attend all meetings

6. What is your current IEEE membership grade?

I am a Senior Member.

****

Mark Haselkorn, University of Washington

1. Who are you and what do you do in your career?

Professor and Founding Chair of the Department of Technical Communication in the College of Engineering at the University of Washington. Also, Co-Director of the University of Washington's Interdisciplinary Program on Humanitarian Relief.
I do research, teaching and service activities.

2. What contributions have you made previously to IEEE and particularly to PCS through your volunteer activities?

- Vice-President (President-elect), 2007-08
- Conference Chair, International Professional Communication Conference, "Engineering the Future of Human Communication," Seattle, October 2007.
- Chair, Standards Committee, IEEE Professional Communication Society, Jan. 2004 – present.
- Chair, Electronic Information Committee, IEEE Professional Communication Society, 2003.
- Administrative Committee, IEEE Professional Communication Society, Jan.1992-1999; March 2002-present.
- Head, IEEE Technical Activities IT Initiative, 2000-2001
- Vice Chair, IEEE New Technologies Direction Committee, 2000-2001
- Chair, IEEE Year 2000 Coordinating Committee, 1998-2000.
- Chair, Public Image Focus Group, IEEE Technical Activities, 1999-2000
- Member, TAB Strategic Planning and Review Committee, 1998-2000
- Member, TAB New Technologies Direction Committee, 1998-1999
- Founding Member, Intelligent Transportation Systems Council, 1997-1999
- President, IEEE Professional Communication Society (PCS), 1997-98
- Member, TAB Management Committee, 1998
- Member, TAB Blue Ribbon Committee (Reorganization), 1996-98
- Member, TAB Finance Committee, 1997-98
- Member, TAB Products Council, 1997-98
- Chair, Professional Communication Chapter in the Seattle Section of IEEE, 1992-1996
- Associate Editor, IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication, 1986-1995
- Chair, Technical Program Committee, International Professional Communication Conference, 1987-1988.

3. What other professional organizations do you belong to, and what are your past and present volunteer activities with them?

- American Society of Engineering Educators
- Association for Computing Machinery

- Society for Technical Communication

4. What specific contributions do you think that you could make if elected to the PCS AdCom?

Promote the field of technical communication and the discipline of professional communication in engineering environments to IEEE as a whole. Emphasize the close connection between practice and research.

5. How many meetings will you attend each year?

3

6. What is your current IEEE membership grade?

Senior Member

****

Walter H. Lee, Jr. (Wally), T-Alpha Networks

1. Who are you and what do you do in your career?

I am a self-employed consultant in systems engineering and network communications. I specialize in writing technical proposals in those areas. I have a broad engineering-based background in integration and testing of large hardware/software systems.

As a consultant to WinStar, I was a key member of the team chartered to produce the proposal for the Washington Interagency Telecommunications System (WITS). In this capacity, I Integrated teammates' technical solutions into the final WITS architecture. I introduced systems to perform the same functions as those provided by the incumbent telephone company, but at significantly lower cost. I was personally responsible for the demonstration showing WinStar's qualifications to bid on the contract. As a result of these efforts, WinStar won several multi-million dollar awards for the GSA Metropolitan Area Access (MAA) contracts.

In other consulting engagements I teamed with small companies for projects on public safety wireless, E911, automatic vehicle location (AVL) for the Bureau of Prisons, public safety access point (PSAP) requirements for the Sergeant at Arms of the Senate, and several wireless and VoIP systems for small cities and counties.

2. What contributions have you made previously to IEEE and particularly to PCS through your volunteer activities?

I have been an IEEE member for 16 years. I have received three IEEE service awards and was promoted to Senior Member in 2006. I am very active in local IEEE activities, especially the following:

- IEEE National Capital Area Consultants Network Affinity Group (NCA-CN)

  As chair of the NCA-CN, I presented a series of web-based marketing and sales programs for consultants, after which membership increased by 20%. I have served as Program Chair and Nominating Committee member and continue an active role in leadership of the group as a member of the Executive Committee.

- IEEE Women in Engineering Affinity Group (WIE)

  I joined Women in Engineering in response to the article in The Institute: “Why Jane Won’t Go to Engineering School.” I support all the meetings and work closely with the local chapter leaders. By leveraging my involvement with other IEEE entities (especially the Consultants Network), I have helped the WIE chapter be successful through effective networking within the IEEE community.

- IEEE Professional Communication Society (PCS)

  I joined PCS in search of a resource to continuously upgrade my written and web-based communication skills for presentations and proposals. I work closely with the present chair of the NCA-CN, who is also a PCS member. We hope to get more technical communication consulting assignments through our combined technical expertise, and writing and teaching skills. When we found that there was no local PCS chapter for the Washington, DC Metro area, we decided to form one.

NCA-CN hosted an event recently to recruit IEEE senior member candidates and present employment and career development opportunities. We were overwhelmed with the response—120 people. We have exploited the success of this event as a vehicle to publicize the proposed PCS chapter to individual PCS members and the local IEEE Sections. Although much work remains to be done, the initial response has been enthusiastic.

3. What other professional organizations do you belong to, and what are your past and present volunteer activities with them?

- IEEE Communications Society Member
- IEEE Computer Society Member
- Montgomery County (MD) Girls in Technology Task Force

The Girls in Technology task force is part of a state-wide initiative to encourage young women to go into science and engineering. I act as a technical resource to members from the county school system.

4. What specific contributions do you think that you could make if elected to the PCS AdCom?

I will continue to work on the formation of the new Washington/Baltimore chapter. The lessons learned from this exercise may be replicable for other potential new chapters. I notice that when I mention the Professional Communication Society to other IEEE members, they instantly ask what the difference is between PCS and the Communication Society. One of our first jobs is to let people know that PCS exists and how it can benefit them. We can start accomplishing this by writing features for the *Scanner*, the local IEEE newspaper which goes to over 15,000 members. I have done this before, so I know it works. We are also considering a small conference in conjunction with WIE and NCA-CN.

I can offer a different perspective than the academic members of the society. I have been on the front lines of engineering practice, witnessing people who should be taking technical communication courses but aren't, and it isn't pretty. Most of them probably don't even know that their writing is bad, except the non-native English speakers. They know, but there is little help available once one has graduated.

5. How many meetings will you attend each year?

I will attend all meetings in the Baltimore-Washington Area, the IPCC, and any regional conferences held in Region 2.

6. What is your current IEEE membership grade?

I am a Senior Member and have recently participated in senior member upgrade programs.

****

Elizabeth Pass, James Madison University

1. Who are you and what do you do in your career?

I am an Associate Professor in the Institute of Technical & Scientific Communication at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. I teach a range of courses at the undergraduate and graduate level, such as core introductory courses, web design and theory, instructional design and training, proposal writing, ethics and legal issues, research methods, and rhetorical theory and analysis. However, my main teaching focus is from the Online Publications Specialization curriculum I helped to develop. The courses I teach in the specialization are 'Web Design and Theory' and the 'Business of Web Design'.

My research interests correspond with my teaching in the Online Publications Specialization. I'm interested in web design and usability, especially with a focus on accessibility. I've also become interested in curriculum issues, as I've been the curriculum and instruction representative for our department at the college level for several years, and the representative for our college at the university level for the past year.

2. What contributions have you made previously to IEEE and particularly to PCS through your volunteer activities?

I am currently a member of the PCS AdCom. On AdCom, I am specifically serving on the Operations Planning Committee, helping to develop the procedures/operations for the organization.

In my courses, my students are introduced to PCS. I believe that as a member and as a teacher, it is important to bring in new people into the community. Students in Technical and Scientific Communication are shown the professional societies in their fields (e.g., IEEE, PCS, STC, ACM) and learn that these are important resources to their academic and professional careers.

3. What other professional organizations do you belong to, and what are your past and present volunteer activities with them?

- IEEE-PCS, joined 2002. PCS AdCom member; Operations Planning Committee
- Society for Technical Communication (STC), joined 1994. Adviser, JMU Student Chapter of STC; Fall 2003-present. Co-Adviser, JMU Student Chapter of STC; Fall 2002-Spring 2003
- Association for Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW), joined 1993. Ethics Committee; Fall 1998-Spring 1999. International Communication Committee; Fall 1998-Spring 1999
- Journal of Technical Writing and Communication, Spring 2004-present, Editorial Board member

- National Council of Teacher of English (NCTE), joined 1992. Intellectual Property Caucus Committee Member Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC); Fall 1999-Spring 2001. Executive Board Member, Research Network Forum (CCCC); Spring 1996-2000
- Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), joined 2002
- Modern Language Association (MLA), joined 1992

4. What specific contributions do you think that you could make if elected to the PCS AdCom?

I have started working on the PCS Operations Manual, and I would like to continue that work and see it through. I have organizational and administrative skills from the listed volunteer positions, as well as some international nonprofessional positions I hold.

I have worked with an organization for over 19 years, handling recruitment, training committees, and coordinating administration at different levels of the international organization. I am used to working with a large number of volunteers and a diversity of chapters spread across the nation.

5. How many meetings will you attend each year?

I am happy to attend all of them (both meetings and the conference call).

6. What is your current IEEE membership grade?

My IEEE grade is Member.

****

Kirk St.Amant, Texas Tech University

1. Who are you and what do you do in your career?

My name is Kirk St.Amant, and I'm an assistant professor of Technical Communication and Rhetoric at Texas Tech University. In that role, I teach undergraduate and graduate courses (both face-to-face and online) in technical communication, intercultural communication, and instructional design. I also do research in international communication, with a focus on international outsourcing, globalizing online education, and cross-cultural communication in cyberspace.

2. What contributions have you made previously to IEEE and particularly to PCS through your volunteer activities?

I have been a member of the PCS AdCom since 2004, and in that capacity have served as the PCS press liaison where I have worked to both increase PCS involvement in publishing projects (e.g., recruiting PCS members to serve on the editorial boards of different publications and working with publishers to find outlets for materials written by PCS members) and to increase outside interest in PCS publishing projects, including recruiting authors for PCS publications (e.g., the PCS Newsletter). I am also guest editing a special international outsourcing issue of the *Transactions on*

Professional Communication and have used that opportunity to increase external interest and participation in PCS publishing projects.

Additionally, I am the conference chair for PCS's 2008 International Professional Communication Conference (IPCC), which will take place in Montreal, Canada, and I am working with personnel from different organizations to establish a formal PCS archive at Texas Tech University.

Since joining PCS in 1997, I have contributed articles to the *Transactions on Professional Communication* and the *PCS Newsletter* (where I currently write a regular column). I am also a member of the Board of Regular Reviewers for the *Transactions on Professional Communication*. I have been a reviewer and a conference committee member for IPCC 2004, 2005 (where I was also a proposal review coordinator), and 2006, and presented papers at these conferences as well as IPCC 2001. I also served as the PCS ambassador to Ukraine during a 2001 educational outreach program sponsored by USAID.

3. What other professional organizations do you belong to, and what are your past and present volunteer activities with them?

I am currently a member of the Society for Technical Communication (STC), and am a member of the Editorial Advisory Board for its journal, *Technical Communication*, as well as serving as a reviewer and a review coordinator for the journal. I have contributed articles and book reviews to the journal and articles to the STC magazine *Intercom*. Additionally, I am the co-advisor for Texas Tech University's STC student chapter.

I am also a member of the Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication (CPTSC), and I have served on the conference committee for CPTSC's 2005 and 2006 conferences. Additionally, I currently serve as the Program Review Coordinator for CPTSC, and in that role, I am currently revising CPTSC's program review process and related materials, as well as co-editing an upcoming *Technical Communication* issue, which will focus on the program review process in technical communication.

4. What specific contributions do you think that you could make if elected to the PCS AdCom?

I believe I could make the following contributions as a member of the AdCom:

- Investigate publishing opportunities for PCS members in new venues (e.g., different presses or different press series) in order to raise the profile of PCS within professional and technical communication and overall engineering communities.
- Increase involvement in PCS publishing opportunities in the *PCS Newsletter* and the *Transactions on Professional*

Communication by working with PCS members and non-members who might be interested in such opportunities.
- Raise student involvement in and membership in PCS and involvement in PCS-related publishing opportunities.
- Create a centralized archive of PCS materials (Newsletter articles, Transactions Articles, conference proceedings, etc.) that can be used in research in professional and technical communication.
- Organize regional or student conferences that would highlight the activities of PCS within IEEE and within professional and technical communication.

5. How many meetings will you attend each year?

I will attend the AdCom meeting at the IPCC each year, the virtual/teleconferencing AdCom meeting each year, and the additional/non IPCC face-to-face AdCom meeting each year.

6. What is your current IEEE membership grade?

My current IEEE membership grade is "Member."

****

Michaël Steehouder, University of Twente, The Netherlands

1. Who are you and what do you do in your career?

I am a full professor of Technical Communication at the University of Twente, The Netherlands. I teach technical communication to engineers, as well as to communication specialists. My courses include Communication skills, Rhetoric, Argumentation and User Support. My research interests are document design and technical communication. My current projects include technical instructions, electronic services of public (government) organizations, and helpdesk conversations.

2. What contributions have you made previously to IEEE and particularly to PCS through your volunteer activities?

I have been an associate editor of the *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication* since 1999, including a guest editorship in 2004. I have been an AdCom member since 2004. I am currently vice-chair of the Regional Activities Committee and PCS representative in INTECOM, the international platform for Technical Communication.

3. What other professional organizations do you belong to, and what are your past and present volunteer activities with them?

I am chair of STIC, the Dutch society for Technical Communication. I was one of the co-founders of TCeurope, the platform for European organizations of Technical Communication, co-author of the *Guidelines for Professional Education and Training of Technical Communicators in Europe*. I co-organized several national (Dutch) and international conferences on technical communication, such as Quality of Technical Communication (1993) and Forum 1995.

4. What specific contributions do you think that you could make if elected to the PCS AdCom?

I would like to continue and to expand my current activities to strengthen the international focus of PCS. After all, over 40% of our members live outside North America. I hope to contribute to another IPCC (2010?) in Europe, after the very

successful IPCC 2005 in Ireland.

5. How many meetings will you attend each year?

Unforeseen events aside, I will attend all meetings.

6. What is your current IEEE membership grade?

Senior Member

****