

SCR News

Society for Case Research Newsletter

Editor: Jeff W. Totten

Spring 2005

President's Letter

May 2005

Dear SCR Members,

The 2005 Annual Meeting in Chicago was a great success; congratulations to Martha Fransson for a job well done! I was again impressed with the quality of the presentations and cases. The summer workshop to be held at the Idaho State University campus will be yet another opportunity for continued professional interaction and learning. Details about the workshop are included in this newsletter.

An important addition to the Society's activities this year was the case writing student competition. Thanks go to Business Week for sponsoring the awards and to those SCR members who reviewed the cases. I think we could consider this competition a great success!

This year will be another busy year for the Society. We are continuing to develop formal contracts to index our cases from Annual Advances and the Business Case Journal. Also, this year we will be piloting a process where membership dues can be paid on-line. We are continuing to develop the web site to make it a valuable and easily accessible resource.

I look forward to serving you as the President of SCR for the next year-thank you for the trust you have placed in me to continue the good work of those who have come before me.

Cheryl L. Noll, President
Society for Case Research

Reminder from the Treasurer

Dues are now \$50 per year. The SCR dues year runs from July 1st through June 30th. If you have not renewed your membership, contact Karen Foust at Tulane University (see page 6).

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SCR's Website: www.sfcr.org

CHICAGO PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



ABOVE (L): Roy Cook (Fort Lewis Co., emeritus professor) receives the Distinguished Paper Award from Barb Nemecek for his work, co-authored with Larry Goff (Fort Lewis Co.), titled "A Case Study of the Case Writing Experience: A Mini-Case Example." ABOVE (R): Cook also received the Phil Fisher Best Service Award. BELOW (L): Bob Meadows (Morehead State, emeritus professor) received the Lynda Goulet Best Reviewer Award. BELOW (R): Dan Rutledge (Purdue NC) received the 2004 Best Case Award for "Callahan's Market."



[Continued on page 3]

Check out SCR's website for information and updates, including previous issues of this newsletter!

Go to: <http://www.sfc.org>.

[Chicago Highlights, continued]



LEFT: Ed Leonard (IPFW, emeritus professor) received the Distinguished Mini-Case Award for his work, co-authored with Francine Seegers (IPFW), titled, "No Place For Women In The Maintenance Department."

BELOW (L): Deb Parker (BusinessWeek) is shown announcing the best student case competition winners. Awards were given out during the MBAA general meeting.

The Award Winners were from:

1. Loyola University of New Orleans ("Savage's Bakery: Knowing When to Invest More and When to Sell," by George Howard, Elizabeth Scott, and Mary Whitehouse)
2. Western Illinois University ("NHL Lockout," by Brian Fairman, et al.)
3. University of Missouri at Kansas City ("Is It Time To 'Spin-Off' or Sell Everest Connections, Inc.?", by Taylor Grace, et al.)



NEW OFFICERS ELECTED!

PRESIDENT: Cheryl Noll, Eastern Illinois U.

PRESIDENT-ELECT: Martha Fransson, RPI-Hartford

VICE PRESIDENT, PROGRAMS: Robyne Hart, Hanover College

BOARD MEMBERS: Carl Witte (Roosevelt U.) for two years (Hart's slot); Joe Thomas (Middle Tennessee State U.) for three years; Ken Rhee (Northern Kentucky U.) for three years.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

- If you are interested in serving as Secretary and can attend board meetings in Chicago and at the summer workshops, please contact Cheryl Noll, President.
- We need someone to represent SCR on the board of directors of the North American Case Research Association (NACRA). If interested, let Cheryl Noll know.
- Ed's more than ready to give up the editorship of the *Business Case Journal*!!

SUMMER WORKSHOPS

2005: Idaho State University → Pocatello, ID → July 14th – 16th

2006: Indiana U. /Purdue U. @ Fort Wayne → July 6th – 8th

2007: Southeastern Louisiana University → Hammond, LA → June 21st – 23^d

&

2008 is set!

Northern Kentucky University, Greater Cincinnati Metro Area, mid-July

- **The Ohio River & the Queen City**
- **Underground Railroad museum**
- **Newport at the Levee (shopping)**
 - **Riverboat cruises**
 - **The Cincinnati Zoo**
 - **The Newport Aquarium**

2005 Summer Case Workshop Idaho State University July 14-16, 2005

The 27th Annual Summer Case Writers' Workshop will be held at Idaho State University in Pocatello, Idaho, July 14-16, 2005. Pocatello is located in southeastern Idaho, about a two-hour drive north of Salt Lake City and a three-hour drive from Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks.

Deadline for Submissions: Cases and teaching notes should be submitted no later than May 1, 2005. Early case submission is allowed and encouraged. Case writers will receive e-mail notification regarding their case submissions no later than May 20, 2005. Submissions, preferably in Rich Text Format (.rtf) format and should be attached to an e-mail addressed to scr@cob.isu.edu.

When and Where: The workshop begins with dinner on Thursday, July 14, 2005, and continues through lunch on Saturday, July 16, 2005. All sessions will be held on the Idaho State University campus. An evening social activity featuring local attractions will take place on Friday evening for participants and their families.

Cost of the Workshop: Registration for the workshop will be approximately \$145 (covering all sessions, meals from Thursday night through lunch on Saturday, refreshment breaks, and the social function on Friday afternoon and evening), plus SCR dues of \$50. All participants in the workshop must be members of SCR. Membership benefits include a year's subscription to the *Business Case Journal*, *Annual Advances in Business Cases* and the SCR newsletter.

Lodging: Inexpensive lodging opportunities will be provided on campus (about \$18 per adult per night) as well as many off-campus locations (about \$45-\$55 per night). Details will be provided in the registration packet that will be available in early 2005. Participants planning to combine workshop attendance with a visit to Yellowstone or Grand Teton National Park should make their part reservations as soon as possible.

Registration: Registration forms, workshop preparation packets, and other information about vacation planning will be available early in 2005.

Questions or Additional Information: Contact Mark Bezik by e-mail at bezimark@isu.edu or by phone at 208-282-4769.

Bill Stratton, VP Summer 2005 Workshop

Case Writing: To Disguise or Not to Disguise?

Handout Prepared by Bill Stratton for Panel Discussion at Chicago Meeting

Cases Are Disguised to Achieve a Number of Objectives:

1. To protect the identity of individuals in the case who might be embarrassed by disclosure.
(Names of individuals are changed, but the organization may remain identifiable)
 - This may provide anonymity in very large organizations, but not in small ones.
 - This may not provide anonymity for individuals in unique roles in the organization.
2. To protect the identity of an organization that may be portrayed unfavorably.
(Names of individuals in the case and the name and location of the organization are changed)
 - The organization may remain identifiable if the case depicts a high profile situation.
 - The organization may remain identifiable due to the author's known affiliation with it.
3. To protect proprietary information that might be useful to competitors.
(Names of individuals and the organization are changed and data is disguised as well)
 - Sometimes even the industry of the organization in question is changed to guarantee anonymity.
 - Another approach provides no proprietary information and/or alters key data for an identified firm.
4. To protect the author from retaliation or attack (legal or otherwise).
 - Individuals identified in the case may have direct or indirect power over the author.
 - Direct power may be exercised by someone in higher authority in the author's organization.
 - Indirect outside power may be exerted to influence or punish the author.
 - Individuals identified in the case may take legal recourse if they feel libeled by the case.
(Note: being sued is never a good experience, even if you win)
 - The organization may take legal recourse if trade secrets or proprietary information is revealed.

Problems With Disguised Cases:

1. Permission to use the case may be difficult to secure--a desire for anonymity surmises some issue exists.
 - The issue of securing permission, and under what conditions, should be explored early.
2. Teaching effectiveness when using the case is often compromised.
 - Students using the case cannot go to the public sources or the company itself to secure information.
 - Students cannot use industry information when the industry as well as the firm is disguised, or they may use incorrect industry information if they are not aware of the industry disguise.
3. Difficulty of making the disguise absolutely secure for some of the reasons mentioned above.
 - Any resulting loss of anonymity always involves risks as mentioned above.
4. Verisimilitude (sense of authenticity) of the case (the degree to which the nuances inherent in: (1) the descriptions of the organization, its people, and their behaviors, (2) the integrity of data and company information presented, and (3) the relevance of the industry portrayed are all compromised to the extent that disguises are employed. A disguised case must necessarily begin to depart from reality and become partly fiction. The result is a loss of a certain authenticity and richness. (Note: this is one reason that purely fictionalized cases (armchair cases) are never acceptable for presentation or publication by SCR.)

Conclusions Regarding the Disguising of Cases:

1. Disguise a case only as a last resort--avoid doing so if at all possible.
2. Disguise to the minimum extent possible--changing only the names of individuals is better than changing the names of both individuals and the organization, which is better than changing the names of the individuals and the organization and masking the industry as well.
3. Get permission from the proper authority to present or publish the case to minimize any possible repercussions, particularly should the disguise fail at some point.

The editor thanks Bill Stratton for graciously sharing this handout for the newsletter.

ISBN for 2005 Proceedings

The ISBN was accidentally left off the CDs of the SCR 2005 Proceedings. For your records, the ISBN is:

ISBN0-9746643-6-7

WHO TO CONTACT AT SCR

President:

Cheryl L. Noll
Eastern Illinois University
Charleston, IL 61920-3099
(217) 581 – 7824
clnoll@eiu.edu

President-Elect & Chair of Publications Committee:

Martha Fransson
Rensselaer at Hartford
Hartford, CT 06120-2991
(860) 548 – 7831
fransson@rh.edu

Immediate Past President:

Barb Nemecek, Dean
University of Wisconsin R. Falls
River Falls, WI 54022-5001
(715) 425 – 3335
barbara.nemecek@uwrf.edu

Vice President-2005 Program:

Robyne Hart
Hanover College
Hanover, IN 47243-0890
(812) 866 – 7364
hartr@hanover.edu

Vice President-2005 Summer

Workshop:
Bill Stratton, Dean
Idaho State University
Pocatello, ID 83209
(208) 282 – 3585
strabill@isu.edu

Treasurer:

Karen Foust
Tulane University
New Orleans, LA 70118-5669
(504) 865 – 5548
kfoust@tulane.edu

Secretary:

Bruce C. Sherony
Cisler College of Business
Northern Michigan University
Marquette, MI 49855-5359
(906) 227 – 1236
bsherony@nmu.edu

At Large Directors:

Dean Dudley (Director Emeritus)
Professor Emeritus
Eastern Illinois University

Claire Kilian (2006)
U.W. River Falls
(715) 425 – 3335
Claire.m.kilian@uwrf.edu

Robert W. Service (2006)
Samford University
(205) 726 – 2544
rwservic@samford.edu

Carl Witte (2007)
Roosevelt University
Chicago, IL 60605
312-281-3259
cwitte@roosevelt.edu

Janet Papiernik (2007)
IU-PU Fort Wayne
Fort Wayne, IN 46805-1499
(260) 481 – 6477
papiernj@ipfw.edu

Joe Thomas (2008)
Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro, TN 37132
(615) 898-5652
jgthomas@mtsu.edu

Kenneth S. Rhee (2008)
Northern Kentucky University
Highland Heights, KY 41099
(859) 572 – 6310
rhee@nku.edu

Archivist:

James W. Camerius
Northern Michigan University
Marquette, MI 49855-5359
(906) 227 – 1245
jcameriu@nmu.edu

Director for External Relations:

Editor of Annual Advances in
Business Cases:
Kay Hodge
University of Nebraska at Kearney
Kearney, NE 68849
hodgek@unk.edu

Editor of Business Case Journal:

Ed Leonard
IU-PU Fort Wayne
Fort Wayne, IN 46805-1499
(260) 481 – 6489
Leonard@ipfw.edu

Editor of SCR Newsletter:

Jeff Totten (2005)
Southeastern Louisiana University
SLU 10844
Hammond, LA 70402
(985) 549 – 5776
jtotten@selu.edu

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The purpose of the Society for Case Research (SCR) is to assist in the development of individual efforts in the field of case writing, case teaching, and case research which enhances business education. The major objectives of the SCR are to provide programs for the exchange of ideas and the improvement of case research, writing, and teaching; to assist in the publication of written cases or case research and other scholarly work; and, to provide recognition for excellence in case research, writing, and teaching.