

Society for Case Research Newsletter

Summer 2013

www.sfcr.org/



President's Message

It's a sweltering hot, steamy summer in the Northeast, but I am so energized by having participated with you at the 35th Annual Summer Workshop at Western Connecticut State. It's truly an honor being your President this year. I continue to be amazed at the many different kinds of cases and the clever hooks and approaches to theory designed to illustrate their applicability to real world situations. Ultimately our goal is to reach the students and engage them, so that they too are energized, renewed and focused.

We had a successful pre-workshop full day session on Wed. July 17th in which Cara Peters, Craig Davis and I worked with 19 faculty who wanted to learn and hone the skills of case writing. The Workshop itself was also well attended with 42 people coming to sessions. Twenty-seven cases were presented and discussed on Friday and Saturday morning. On Friday night many of us were treated to a view of Manhattan and New Jersey as we sat on a dinner cruise. The Silent Auction raised \$346 for Student Scholarships to attend our conferences, thanks to our generous, helpful attendees and the good organization and administration of Jeremy O'Connor, our Board member from Rockhurst University. And of course, last but not least, special kudos to Dr. Karen Koza and Dean Allen Morton for their hospitality at Western!

This has been said before, but I want to reiterate it: we have made so many advances in SCR in the last few years all for the benefit of the Society and its members. Many, many thanks to Roy Cook who has been our Executive Director, informally, and now formally, for many years. With his hard work, we have negotiated many agreements with distribution sources: Cengage/Gale, Pearson and Ebsco most recently as well as Xanadu and McGraw-Hill Create. This allows us to distribute our cases widely and to collect royalties to further the work of SCR.

We continue to strive to provide a collegial environment in which to learn how to write cases (and now critical incidents) and teaching notes. Please know that I am always available to talk to you to try to help you get what you need so that you can have a successful, productive case writing experience with us. My very best wishes to you for a wonderful year and see you in Chicago!

Karen

Host a Summer Workshop

Openings for Summer 2015 and beyond. Contact Roy Cook, our Executive Director or Karen Berger, President.

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Save the Date!

MBAA Annual Meeting

March 26-28

Chicago, Illinois

The Palmer House Hotel

36th Annual Summer Workshop

Winthrop University

Rock Hill, South Carolina

July 10--12, 2014

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Publish, Don't Perish With the SCR

If you haven't done so already, go to the web site at sfc.org and pay your dues joining us for meeting and publishing opportunities. The SCR has three different refereed publications. Two of them require attendance at a meeting to participate in a collegial and extensive face-to-face review of your work. The annual meeting is held each year in conjunction with the MBAA in Chicago. This year the meeting is located at the Palmer House. Authors can participate on panels, get help on ideas for possible cases called embryos or submit a three-page Critical Incident and accompanying teaching note for possible publication in the Journal of Critical Incidents. After the meeting, authors incorporate suggestions and begin a process of blind peer reviews. At the summer workshop, authors commit to the entire meeting period and spend sessions having their work reviewed and providing feedback to others. After incorporating the ideas from peers, cases and teaching notes go through a blind peer review process with the goal of publication in Journal of Case Studies. But wait, there's still more! The SCR also publishes the Business Case Journal. Although it isn't linked to the annual meeting or summer workshop, authors often find attending and presenting a case or embryo results in help and feedback to help create a publishable case.

SCR News is published three times a year by the Society for Case Research. Editorial work is completed at Idaho State University by Dr. Ann M. Hackert. The newsletter is sent out via e-mail effective with the Spring 2006 issue and is available online at www.sfc.org.

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.

36th Annual Summer Case Writer's Workshop

Winthrop University

Rock Hill, South Carolina

July 10---12, 2014

Call for Cases

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Case Writers at all stages – prospective authors who want to learn what case writing is all about; new authors that desire feedback, help, and encouragement; and experienced authors who want their cases professionally reviewed.

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

Learn About Case Writing. The Annual Summer Case Writer's Workshop helps prospective authors, new authors, and experienced authors of case writing learn how to prepare cases for classroom use and publication. Concurrent groups meet over 1.5 days to discuss each case submitted. As a case author, you will receive feedback from a group of fellow case writers to help improve your case and teaching note. In each group the author is present; a chair facilitates the feedback process; a scribe takes notes (so the author can listen to the comments and engage with the reviewers). Participants in each group have read the case prior to the workshop and come prepared to offer constructive feedback and suggestions on how a case and accompanying teaching note might be improved.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO SUBMIT A CASE TO ATTEND. Individuals interested in exploring case writing as an alternative to traditional research are encouraged to attend. Note, a preconference workshop will also be offered for those that are new to case writing. In addition, all conference attendees will get the opportunity to review up to five cases as part of their conference attendance.

Publish Your Case. Abstracts of all cases accepted for presentation will be published in the Conference Proceedings. Cases presented at the workshop are eligible for submission to the Journal of Case Studies, a blind---refereed publication sponsored by the Society for Case Research.

Have a Good Time. Workshop participants are a friendly, enthusiastic group who get together to help each other with case writing and case teaching. The program on Friday evening will involve a fun experience for you and your whole family at a local attraction.

36th Annual Summer Case Writer's Workshop

WHERE?

On the campus of Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina. Rock Hill is approximately 25 miles south of Charlotte, North Carolina and 70 miles north of Columbia, South Carolina.

WHEN?

July 10---12, 2014. A pre---conference workshop for new case writers will be offered on July 10th. The conference will then begin with a welcome dinner that same day and sessions will run from 8 am on Friday, July 11th to 1 pm on Saturday, July 12th.

TYPES OF CASES?

Cases are encouraged in ALL BUSINESS DISCIPLINES and will be reviewed by participants from both within and outside the discipline, a particular strength of the SCR workshop leading to cases with broader perspectives. Both decision and descriptive cases are accepted in SCR journals.

Submissions are to be sent to Dr. Cara Peters, Associate Dean at Winthrop University, petersc@winthrop.edu by May 31, 2014.

Casewriter Q&A

Q: What's the difference between a decision and descriptive case?

A: Choices are a **decision case** or a **descriptive case**. In a **decision case** the student is placed in the manager's (decision-makers) position and asked to make recommendations appropriate to the context of the situation. Authors of decision cases conduct field research and interviews which may or may not be supplemented with secondary sources. Information must reflect a real situation with no fictionalized parts. Authors can disguise cases if their research subjects request that. Decision cases require a signed release for publication. Descriptive cases are also accepted. A **descriptive case** is a description of a real situation based on secondary sources. Author(s) must present sufficient background information such that the student can evaluate how effectively the situation was managed.

Q: What's a "hook" and why is it so important?

A: Like any good story, a well-written case or critical incident needs a hook, that "ah-ha" moment of truth that compels students to keep reading and draws them in. Field research coupled with your knowledge of the discipline your case covers will help you create an interesting review of a situation based on research and interviews (decision case) or secondary sources (descriptive case). But you aren't done until you get your hook to start off the case or incident. This is the place to communicate the drama and significance of your work. Think about the hook as you interview in the field and aim for a quote or comment that draws in students and potential adopters.

Casewriter's Corner: Class Your Cases

Companies know the value of marketing and part of that is research to help them understand their customers' perspective. Cases are a great opportunity for faculty to not only have students learn from a company or individual's experiences but, it's also a chance to show them "best practices" they can apply to their own writing and communication.

Class testing a case can be done many ways but one method is to provide students with what you might consider a final draft and then either assign the questions from your teaching note or, for advanced classes, let students figure out what they need to analyze and the decision they need to make.

In advance of the class, let students know you want feedback on the case; how it's written, what they like or don't like and any suggestions for change or added material. It helps if you write cases based on experiences of former students or alumni who can come back and join the class.

Provide students with a framework for feedback with a form you hand out along with the case. It also helps to give them a way to provide anonymous feedback with either written comments or rating scales....or both.

Partnering with your students has benefits for you and for them. There is no better way to help them develop writing skills than to provide writing and editorial feedback to a colleague. If students understand your writing process and that you too find it work, they are more likely to accept your feedback. Keep in mind that class testing your case gives you more than just another set of eyes on your work. Students are your market and knowing how they will interpret and use your case just makes it better when the rest of us adopt it.

As you go over the case in class, ask a colleague or student to take notes on the discussion. That way you have a record of the ideas. Take time at the end of class and ask students or groups to hone in on what items they think of as "must haves" for change. If you also get anonymous feedback, you can incorporate that. Make your students partners in your creative process and everyone wins.

Author: Ann M. Hackert

Class Testing Cases

- ✓ Give students a feedback form or framework
- ✓ Provide an opportunity for anonymous comments
- ✓ Emphasize the writing and communication skills we teach and employers value
- ✓ Remember critical review is a real world skill and you get both feedback and teachable moments
- ✓ Appoint a scribe or ask a colleague to take notes and then read and review them with students to make sure you understand what's important and what to change

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