



# NEWSLETTER

Association for Business Communication

## FROM ABC PRESIDENT, PATRICIA HARMS



Dear ABC Colleagues,

Our Technology Coordinator, Amy Newman; Communication and Operations Manager, Bethany Tisdale; and Executive Director, Kathryn Rybka work hard to continually update the ABC website. The most recent “refresh” gave me an opportunity to look around this tremendous resource that anchors our community. The pages that feature our two journals, *International Journal of Business Communication (IJBC)* and *Business and Professional Communication Quarterly (BPCQ)*, are now easier to navigate. All “My Favorite Assignments,” published in *BPCQ* to-date, have been uploaded, indexed and ready to add to your business communication courses. I hope you’ll explore other sections of the ABC website, too!

Our website reflects many of the ways we build and support community at ABC: award nominations, joint research projects and publications, funding opportunities, invitations to join and participate in research projects, SIG events, teaching circle meetings, our regional and annual conferences, and more.

Were you also aware of our robust community that operates between members? In my role as president, I’ve gained a deeper appreciation for the support that happens between members, often out of the spotlight. I’d like to share a few examples.

A few weeks ago, a member sent a LinkedIn message asking me to consider writing the foreword to a forthcoming book. The authors are both ABC members who began their research collaboration after meeting at an ABC Annual International Conference (a great example of how these connections often begin). While I didn’t feel qualified to write the foreword, I was able to introduce them to another ABC member with deep experience in their area of interest.

Through LinkedIn, I’ve learned about several promotions and awards received by ABC members. In many cases, those offering congratulations are fellow ABC members.

I received a thank-you message after our Long Beach conference that spoke to ABC’s collegiality. The note came from a PhD candidate who presented at our conference for the first time, and she named one specific member who went out of their way to be welcoming.

Our members who lead departments also support each other informally. For example, when one member was working to increase faculty salaries for their faculty team, they were able to gather useful information from another member leading a similar department.

I also know that our members often write promotion letters for other ABC colleagues. Through this work, our recommenders have a direct impact on other members’ professional journeys.

As you read this month’s newsletter, I hope you notice the connections that run through our ABC community. And if you’re not as involved as you’d like to be, please reach out! I’m happy to help connect you with members who share your interests.

Take good care,  
Patty

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## FROM ABC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KATHRYN RYBKA

**Dear Fellow ABC Members:**

One of the many ways we can support and celebrate our community of business communication teachers, researchers, and practitioners is to nominate our colleagues for an ABC award. Did you know there are 20 different awards sponsored by ABC and a generous group of donors? We are also excited to introduce two new awards this year: “[Outstanding Research in International or Intercultural Business Communication](#)” and “[Innovative Teaching in International or Intercultural Business Communication](#).”



Awards are a tangible way to publicly acknowledge the outstanding work of our members. Each year ABC honors our winners at an awards celebration during the in-person Annual International Conference. Sometimes, awardees also invite family, friends, their department head, and/or dean to share this special time in the spotlight.

All awards are administered, and candidates evaluated, by the ABC Nominating Committee (for membership composition, [see Bylaw 1.4.1](#)) or one of our Standing Committees. More details, guidelines, and how to submit a nomination can be found at the corresponding links below. As you can see, our awards cover a breadth of options for faculty and professionals at all career stages as well as students.

**I invite each of you to look through the awards to identify and nominate at least one ABC member.**

Additional nominees for other awards are also welcome! **All 2026 award nominations are due by June 1.**

**Our ABC Awards include the following categories ...**

### SELECTED BY THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- [Fellow of the Association](#)  
For extraordinary excellence in the discipline of business communication
- [Distinguished Member Award](#)  
For long-term service to the Association and the business communication discipline
- [Francis W. Weeks Award of Merit](#)  
For contributions to the profession and advancement in the business communication discipline
- [ABC Rising Star Award](#)  
For members with fewer than 10 years with the Association for meaningful contributions to the mission, membership, and discipline
- [Bernadine P. Branchaw Spirit of ABC Award](#)  
For exceptional members of ABC who exemplify friendliness and openness to newcomers and current members

*Continued ...*

## RESEARCH AND TEACHING AWARDS

- [Outstanding Researcher Award in Memory of Kitty O. Locker](#)  
For research that has made an outstanding contribution to the business communication discipline
- [Outstanding Teacher-Scholar Award in Memory of Meada Gibbs](#)  
For teaching that has made an outstanding contribution to the business communication discipline
- [Innovation in Teaching Business Communication](#)  
For exceptional creativity and forward-thinking approaches that enhance learning and engagement in the business communication classroom
- [Student Case Competition](#)  
Recognition for the faculty member who wrote the winning case and for the faculty sponsor of the first-place student winner.

## CONSULTING AND SERVICE AWARDS

- [Award for Excellence in Communication Consulting](#)  
For the impact of effective professional communication consulting on the corporate, government, and nonprofit worlds—and on the Association
- [Community Perspectives and Practice Award](#)  
For practices fostering community outreach outside the classroom

## RESEARCH GRANT

- [Marty Baker Graham Research Awards](#)  
Financial support for doctoral students engaged in business communication research

## PUBLICATION AWARDS

- [Distinguished Publication on Business Communication](#)
- [Outstanding Article in the \*International Journal of Business Communication\*](#)
- [Outstanding Article in \*Business and Professional Communication Quarterly\*](#)
- [USC Marshall School of Business, Business Communication Impact Award](#)

## STUDENT AWARDS

- [Student Case Competition](#)  
For the first-, second-, and third-place written case submissions.
- [Student Travel Grants](#)  
To support graduate and undergraduate students who will deliver a presentation at the Annual International or a Regional Conference.
- [Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation on Business Communication](#)  
For an outstanding dissertation or thesis in the area of business communication written as part of a doctoral program.

# 2026 ABC ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Dear Colleagues,

Even though the 2026 ABC Annual International is six months away, planning is in full swing. Join us in Baltimore, Maryland, USA, 14–17 October and virtually 26–27 October! Our theme is “Communicating Community,” and there’s no better way to build community among colleagues than by attending the 2026 Annual International Conference.

This year’s programming will include a new session type, the Campfire Talk. These dynamic, conversational sessions will be held in Baltimore on Wednesday afternoon. Following the success of last year’s full slate of workshops, you can also anticipate many one- and two-hour interactive sessions beginning Wednesday as well.

Beyond the conference meeting rooms, Baltimore offers many opportunities for engaging with one another and the local community. Places to experience include:

- [Baltimore Museum of Industry](#), a former oyster cannery on the waterfront now dedicated to preserving the stories of local laborers
- [The Babe Ruth Birthplace and Museum](#), a must for baseball fans
- [B&O Railroad Museum](#), "the birthplace of American railroading"
- [Edgar Allan Poe House and Museum](#), an example of row-house architecture with a literary past
- [Fort McHenry](#), the inspiration for the Star-Spangled Banner
- [National Aquarium](#), a premier attraction showcasing animals “from the depths of the ocean to the canopy of the rain forest”
- [Sherwood Gardens](#), a Frederick Law Olmsted-designed park

You can learn more about all that Baltimore has to offer [here](#). Conference guest rooms are also available to book now at the [Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace Hotel](#).

Please reach out to your conference co-chairs, Barbara Bolt and Bethany Tisdale, with any questions at [ABCconference@businesscommunication.org](mailto:ABCconference@businesscommunication.org). Also, be on the lookout for the Call for Co-Chairs for the 2027 ABC Annual International Conference. We look forward to seeing you in October!

## BALTIMORE BOUND!

**Barbara Bolt and Bethany Tisdale**  
2026 Conference Co-Chairs



# ABC SOUTHWESTERN U.S. CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

The ABC Southwestern U.S. Region is pleased to share the success of its 2026 conference, held in partnership with the Federation of Business Disciplines in Dallas/Richardson, Texas on March 18-21. The conference brought together scholars, educators, and professionals from across the region and beyond for several days of engaging research presentations, collaborative sessions, and meaningful networking opportunities. The strong program highlighted the continued impact and growth of the ABC-SW community.

We are also proud to recognize this year's outstanding award recipients. Please join us in congratulating these individuals for their exceptional contributions to business communication education and research!



Federation of Business  
Disciplines 2026 Outstanding  
Educator Award for ABC SWUS  
**KAYLA SAPKOTA**  
Arkansas State University  
at Beebe



Federation of Business Disciplines 2026  
Distinguished Paper Award for ABC SWUS  
**MARCEL ROBLES**  
Eastern Kentucky University,  
"Transforming Business Communication: The  
Integration of Artificial Intelligence into the  
Curriculum"



ABC SWUS 2026  
Raymond V. Lesikar  
Outstanding Researcher Award  
**SARAH MOORE**  
University of Texas at Dallas

## MAKE SURE YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS UP TO DATE!

Log into the ABC website ([www.businesscommunication.org](http://www.businesscommunication.org)), click on your image, and select Profile. If you need to renew or reactivate your membership, click on "**Explore membership plans**" at the top of the screen or "**Renew Now**" from the left side. Be sure to select the appropriate discount code at checkout for a reduced membership rate to have only electronic journal access unless you prefer to have print copies mailed to you. To receive ABC emails in the future, please add [mail@connectedcommunity.org](mailto:mail@connectedcommunity.org) to your contacts and/or Safe Senders list in Outlook. System emails may be going into your spam folder.

[We value your membership!](#)

If you have questions, contact Amy Newman, Tech Coordinator,  
at [amynewman@cornell.edu](mailto:amynewman@cornell.edu)

# 2026 STUDENT COMPETITION CASE

## ***Submit Your Students' Work for the 2026 Student Competition***

Are your students ready for the challenge? Are they ready for an opportunity to showcase their excellent communication skills?

If you are looking for an engaging and challenging opportunity for your students, please consider incorporating the 2026 Student Competition case, *The Return-to-Office Resistance at Irol Industries*, into your courses. And, of course, nominating your best students' work for the competition!

This year's case, written by Dr. Lori Boyer of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, asks students to step into the role of a communication consultant hired by Irol Industries to address stakeholder concerns while achieving business objectives after a mandatory return-to-office policy was implemented. Students will develop two written products:

- 1) a strategic memo report analyzing the crisis and outlining a recommended communication approach and
- 2) a persuasive cover letter to Irol Industries managing partner that introduces the strategic report and its recommendations.

The 2026 Student Competition case challenges students to consider multiple audiences and constraints, and then compose and communicate a persuasive, professional, and strategic communication approach for the scenario. You can read the full case on the [Student Competition webpage](#).

Undergraduate student submissions may be sponsored by any Association member on behalf of a student in the member's business communication or other appropriate course. The 1st place winner will receive \$300, the 2nd winner \$200, and 3rd place \$100. The winning students' instructors will be announced at the annual conference. The Student Competition Award is sponsored by Communication Partners and Barbara Shwom.

Student submissions can be entered using the form on the [Student Competition Award webpage](#). **Student submissions will be accepted through June 1, 2026.**

Please contact Ashly Smith, the Student Competition Committee chair, at [als121@shsu.edu](mailto:als121@shsu.edu) if you have any questions.

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at [als121@shsu.edu](mailto:als121@shsu.edu) if you have any questions.**

## ABC SOUTHEASTERN U.S. TEACHING CIRCLE

*Everyone is welcome to attend!*

Join the Southeast Region Teaching Circle on Thursday, April 16 from 5:00-6:00 PM EST for a fascinating virtual presentation on “AI + Human-Centered Design & AI Meets Identity.” Our presenter will be **Lenka Beranova** (pictured right), Lecturer at the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University as well as the Founder and Executive Director of PLAYFWD. Contact Laura Graham at [lgraham@campbell.edu](mailto:lgraham@campbell.edu) or Lori Boyer at [lori\\_boyer@kenan-flagler.und.edu](mailto:lori_boyer@kenan-flagler.und.edu) for the Zoom link for this exciting session!



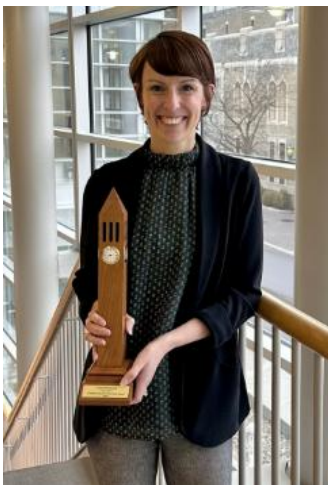
## ABC WRITING CIRCLE SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG)

The ABC Writing Circle SIG is hosting several virtual events to support your writing goals this spring! If you are looking for accountability and support in achieving your writing goals, we'd love to have you join us. The ABC Writing Circle SIG provides support for ALL types of writing: freelance, copy writing, technical writing, textbook, and academic research. Currently the SIG is hosting weekly co-writing sessions from Noon – 2:00 PM Central Time and special topics sessions on the first Monday of the month. To receive the Zoom link for these sessions please email Emily Marett at [emarett@business.msstate.edu](mailto:emarett@business.msstate.edu).

**Upcoming Monthly Special Topics Session:**

**Celebrating and Recording Your Writing Achievements  
Monday, May 4, 6:30 – 7:30 PM CDT**

## MEMBER NEWS



### ***Award Recognition for Distinguished Teaching***

Congratulations to **Christina McDowell** of Cornell University who was awarded the Cornell SC Johnson College of Business Dean's Distinguished Award for Societal Impact in Teaching.

This award honors faculty who advance student learning through innovative pedagogical strategies and creative approaches to teaching. By investing in curriculum innovation, it highlights the societal relevance and transformative impact of teaching in business education.

### ***New Appointment – Teaching Circle Co-Facilitator***

The Southeast Region Teaching Circle is pleased to welcome **Lori Boyer** as the new Co-facilitator. She is a Clinical Associate Professor of Management and Corporate Communication at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Along with **Laura Graham** of Campbell University, she will coordinate and host the sessions. Contact [lori\\_boyer@kenan-flagler.unc.edu](mailto:lori_boyer@kenan-flagler.unc.edu) with proposals for upcoming sessions.

The Southeastern U.S. Region Teaching Circle provides a space for all ABC members to share best practices in teaching and learning. The group meets quarterly via Zoom to learn about innovative strategies and discuss opportunities for growth in the business communication classroom.



### ***New Appointment – Editor in Chief***

**Ana Lúcia Magalhães** of the Technological State of Sao Paulo College has been appointed Editor in Chief of a technical magazine in Brazil, *H-TEC - Humanities and Technology*. The magazine has been around since 2017 and is issued each semester. One of the themes is Business Communication and we invite ABC members to submit articles. The magazine has been upgraded from CNPq Qualis B-2 to A-4. We are working to classify it in more indexers of scientific publications, such as Scopus, Scielo and Web of Science.

[Click here for more information about the magazine.](#)



### ***Doctorate Awarded***

**Gail Flanagan** was awarded her PhD (by research) in Applied Linguistics by the University of Limerick, Ireland on the 20th of January 2026. The title of her thesis was *Spoken Communication in International Virtual Teams in the Irish Technology Sector: A Linguistically-Informed Study of a Community of Practice*.



## MEMBER PUBLICATIONS

### ***Business Communication and Character, 12th Edition***

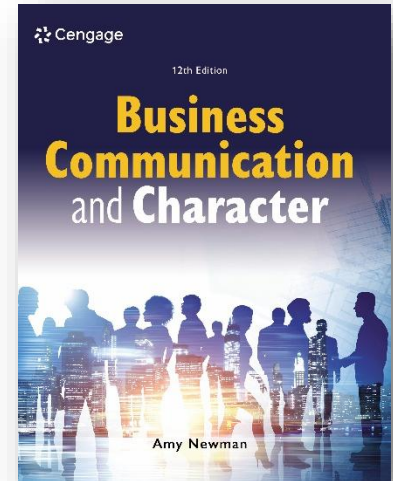
**Amy Newman** of Cornell University announces the 12th edition of the textbook, *Business Communication and Character*. The book elevates students' humanity—who they are as people—and their unique voice to distinguish their communication in the workplace.

Continuing the book's focus on character and its practical approach with real business examples, this edition also provides guidance for leveraging AI and for supporting our neurodivergent students.

The text helps instructors and students meet course goals through the following:

- **The CAM communication model**—character check, audience analysis, message and medium—for planning and developing messages that reflect well on students personally, are tailored to the audience, and achieve communication objectives.
- **Clear guidance for leveraging AI as an assistant and collaborator** while maintaining students' authorship and without compromising their learning.
- **Support for neurodivergent students** and tips for all students to produce their best work.
- **Direct talk about working across differences** in a way that honors multiple perspectives on controversial topics.
- **Practical written, oral, and visual skill development**—not theory—given the realities and complexities of today's work environment.
- **Up-to-date guidance** for an AI-powered job search.
- **Self-reflection questions** throughout the book for deeper personal development.

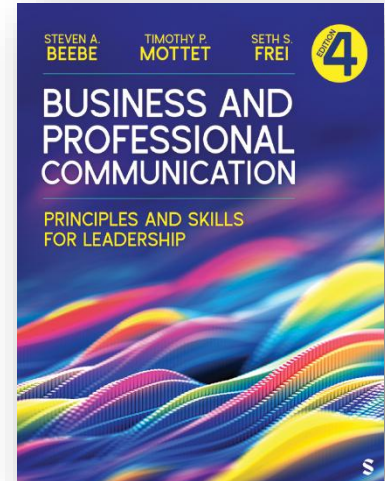
For more information,  
[click here to visit the publisher's website.](#)



## MEMBER PUBLICATIONS, continued ...

### ***Business and Professional Communication: Principles and Skills for Leadership***

This new text focuses on the essential concepts and skills of business and professional communication, emphasizing leadership in today's global workplace. Authors Steven A. Beebe, Timothy P. Mottet, and **Seth S. Frei** structure the text around five core communication principles, offering a practical and accessible framework. These principles are explored through real-world applications, such as workplace relationships, interviewing, teamwork, and presentations. Students gain a deeper understanding of their own communication habits, learn to craft clear and impactful verbal and nonverbal messages, develop strong active listening skills, and refine their ability to adapt communication strategies to meet the needs and styles of others. The Fourth Edition features updated research, including insights on technologies like AI, equipping students to meet the communication and leadership challenges of the workplace.



#### *New to this edition:*

- Major updates to research and pedagogy to include current information on modern technologies, work from home, and online interviewing.
- New co-author Seth Frei brings valuable experience and perspective to the text.
- New chapter on “Writing in a Digital Age” and new appendix on “Virtual Presentations” emphasize the importance of building new skills in the evolving workplace.
- AI coverage interweaved throughout.

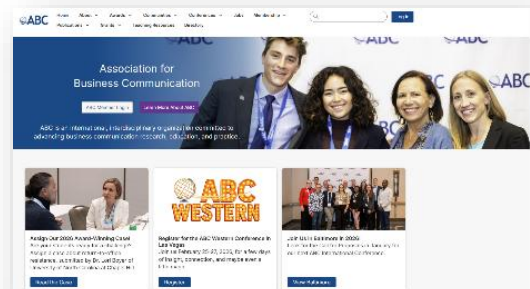
[For more information, click here to visit the publisher's website.](#)

## GET CONNECTED! STAY INFORMED! SHARE MEMBER NEWS!

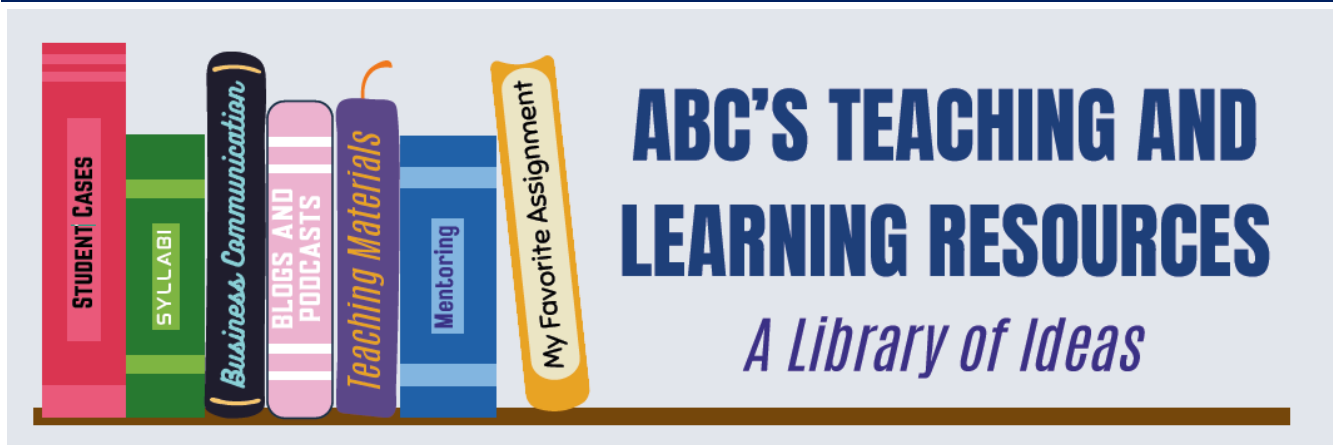
### ***Visit ABC Online!***

Get connected with your ABC region, join special interest groups, learn about annual and regional conference details, access job postings, view publications and calls for papers, apply for grants, and take advantage of our many resources to support your needs. [Click here for the ABC website.](#)

Members of ABC are encouraged to submit newsletter content about your groundbreaking research, book publications, and other news of interest to the ABC community! We want to hear from you! [Click here to share your news.](#)



## RESOURCES FOR ABC MEMBERS



### **PLEASE EXPLORE!**

[Click here to peruse our wealth of resources for teaching business communication](#), developed by and for ABC members. Explore resources for your classes and your professional development. For much of this content, you will need to log in to verify your ABC membership.

#### ***For your classes ...***

- Assignments and Activities
- Award-Winning Cases
- Business Communication Textbooks
- Syllabi

#### ***For your professional development ...***

- Teaching Discussions
- Communication-Related Books
- Mentorship Program
- Blogs and Podcasts by ABC Members

Please also consider contributing your time and materials to these pages so that ABC colleagues around the world can benefit from your experience and ideas. To offer your support, email the Teaching Committee Chair, **Andrew Quagliata** at [aq43@cornell.edu](mailto:aq43@cornell.edu).

### ***MFA: My Favorite Assignment!***

[Click here to access ABC's library](#), which includes hundreds of members' favorite assignments. You can filter by category, such as AI/technology, bad news, crisis communication, entrepreneurship, intercultural, nonverbal, persuasion, and many more!



## RESEARCH & COLLABORATION COMMUNITY



***As an ABC member, you belong to a community of business communication researchers, educators, and practitioners who share your interests.***

You can find collaborators and participants to advance your research, learn about other members' work, and respond to requests that align with your goals. You can post requests for co-editors, project collaborators, research participants, co-presenters, and more.

To opt into this ABC member-only community, [click here to go to the Research and Collaboration page](#) and select "Join" (the blue button on the right side). You'll be asked how you would like to receive email notifications from the group. To ensure this community serves our members, we ask that messages meet these guidelines:

- Focus on a research or collaboration opportunity.
- Are relevant to business communication faculty, students, and/or practitioners.
- Do not promote a specific article, book, product, or service.
- Meet our ABC community [Terms and Conditions Guidelines](#).

When approved, your message will appear on Research and Collaboration group members' homepage, on the community page, and by email for those who opt in. We hope you'll use this space to connect with ABC colleagues around the world.

**Please let us know if you have any questions about this exciting and new initiative!**  
[executive.director@businesscommunication.org](mailto:executive.director@businesscommunication.org)

## ABC MENTORSHIP PROGRAM



***If you are interested in serving as a mentor or in finding a mentor that fits your specialization or interests in business communication, please add your name to the list found on the ABC home page under Resources.***

Mentorship is valuable at every career stage from school to retirement, and our deep bench of knowledgeable members who would like to participate in this program make it a valuable experience.

The ABC Mentorship Program aims to make it easier for members to seek new knowledge from each other; facilitate and provide a structure for formal mentorship; increase member satisfaction, engagement, and retention rates; and improve the value of our association.

**If you have any questions about the ABC Mentorship Program, please reach out to Jessica Nevitt at [jknevitt@iu.edu](mailto:jknevitt@iu.edu).  
[Click here for more information.](#)**

# YOUR ABC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President .....	<b>Patricia Harms</b> , University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA
Vice President .....	<b>Christopher Toth</b> , Grand Valley State University, Michigan, USA
Immediate Past President .....	<b>Judith Ainsworth</b> , McGill University, Montreal, Quebec
Executive Director .....	<b>Kathryn Rybka</b> , Association for Business Communication

## REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

Asia-Pacific .....	<b>Misa Fujio</b> , Toyo University, Tokyo
Canada .....	<b>Valerie Creelman</b> , Saint Mary's University, Nova Scotia
Caribbean, Mexico, Central/South America ....	<b>Ana Lucia Magalhaes</b> , State of Sao Paulo Technological College
Europe, Africa, Middle East .....	<b>Ursula Lutzky</b> , Vienna University of Economics and Business
Eastern U.S. ....	<b>Nancy Mahon</b> , Pennsylvania State University
Midwestern U.S. ....	<b>Paula Lentz</b> , University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
Southeastern U.S. ....	<b>Barbara Bolt</b> , University of South Carolina
Southwestern U.S. ....	<b>Lindsay Clark</b> , Sam Houston State University, Texas
Western U.S. ....	<b>Scott and Ann Springer</b> , Brigham Young University, Hawaii

## DIRECTORS AT LARGE

.....	<b>William Christopher Brown</b> , Midland College, Texas, USA
	<b>Greet Angèle De Baets</b> , UCLouvain, Brussels
	<b>Christina McDowell</b> , Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, USA
	<b>Leslie Ramos Salazar</b> , West Texas A&M University, USA
	<b>Leslie Seawright</b> , Missouri State University, USA
	<b>Lisa Gueldenzoph Snyder</b> , North Carolina A&T State University

# YOUR ABC COMMUNITIES

## COMMITTEES & BOARDS

- Academic Environment
- Business Practices
- Community Perspectives and Practice
- Finance
- Graduate Studies
- International and Intercultural Business Communication
- Modern Language Association (MLA) Liaison
- National Communication Association (NCA) Liaison
- Priscilla S. Rogers and C.R. Anderson Research Fund
- Proceedings Editorial Review Board
- Publications Board
- Research
- Student Competition
- Teaching

## SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

- ABC Writing Circle
- Business Communication Centers
- Consulting
- Generative AI and Teaching Business Communication
- Rhetoric

