

ECREA
Temporary Working Group on Crisis Communication

Annual Report 2012

Foundation: June 2011

Chair:

- Andreas Schwarz, Ilmenau University of Technology, Germany
e-mail: andreas.schwarz@tu-ilmenau.de

Vice Chairs:

- Winni Johansen, Aarhus University, Business and Social Sciences, Denmark
e-mail: wj@asb.dk
- Alessandra Mazzei, IULM University, Milan, Italy
e-mail: alessandra.mazzei@iul.it

Mission

The group aims at building a platform for European and international communication scholars to critically discuss different theoretical approaches and empirical findings on crisis communication and to collaborate across sub-disciplines.

The TWG advocates a broader understanding of crisis communication, which includes work in different sub-disciplines of communication such as journalism, public relations, corporate communications, organizational communication, audience research, media psychology, political communication, health communication, computer-mediated communication, and international/intercultural communication. The Temporary Working Group on Crisis Communication is a platform to look for common patterns of how crises are socially constructed by involved actors, how the media bring up and frame crises, but also the way different audiences perceive and make sense of crises.

For further details about the goals of the TWG and its modus operandi see this website: <http://www.ecrea.eu/divisions/twg/id/24>

Membership

By March 13, 2013, the TWG on Crisis Communication counts 99 members. They are scholars coming from more than 20 countries in Europe, Asia and the Americas.

The International Crisis Communication Conference series 2013

After the international conference “Crisis Communication in an Age of Complexity”, organized by ASB Centre for Corporate Communication, Aarhus School of Business

and Social Sciences, Aarhus University, Denmark (October 6-8, 2011), the TWG on Crisis Communication will be partner of the next conference of this series in 2013.

Entitled "Crossing Boundaries in Crisis Communication" the conference will be hosted by Ilmenau University of Technology and the International Research Group on Crisis Communication. The conference will be held from October 2-5, 2013 at the Comcenter Brühl in Erfurt (Germany). This event is part of a biennial conference series that has been started in 2009 at Ilmenau University of Technology in Germany by Martin Löffelholz and Andreas Schwarz.

The Third International Conference on Crisis Communication at the Beginning of the 21st Century intends to offer an integrative and truly international perspective. It will broaden the perspectives on crisis communication by discussing the theoretical, methodological, and practical implications of domestic and transnational crises. In addition, it aims at giving a comprehensive overview on how scholarship in crisis communication has developed in different disciplines and in different countries in the world. The organizers of the conference call for contributions that present innovative perspectives on international and/or cross-cultural crisis communication. In addition, the conference will offer conceptual and/or empirical approaches to crisis communication that cross institutional, disciplinary, and epistemological 'boundaries'.

More information and the Call for Papers are available at this website:

<http://www.tu-ilmenau.de/mw/crisis3/>

First Business Meeting at ECREA 2012

The first Business Meeting of the TWG on Crisis Communication took place on October 26, 2012 during the ECREA Conference 2012 in Istanbul.

The Agenda was the following:

- The TWG today
- The foundation
- Objectives
- Modus operandi
- Management team
- Activities June 2011-October 2012
- Next elections
- Next conference
- Towards a journal of crisis communication
- Open slot

Objectives and Modus operandi

The Objectives and Modus operandi of the TWG on Crisis Communication are the ones in the document approved by ECREA. After the presentation of the objectives, the participants of the Business Meeting agreed with the proposal and did not propose any new ones.

The management team

According to the modus operandi approved by ECREA, the TWG on Crisis Communication has a Management team that is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Temporary Working Group, proposing initiatives for the further development of the Temporary Working Group, and for implementing the decisions made by the membership.

The members of the Management Team are elected every two years. The maximum term of office for any member of the Management Team is six consecutive years (3 terms).

Activities June 2011 - October 2012

The TWG has been partner of the International Conference "Crisis Communication in an Age of Complexity", organized by ASB Centre for Corporate Communication, Aarhus School of Business and Social Sciences, Aarhus University, Denmark, October 6-8, 2011. This event was part of a biennial conference series on Crisis Communication that has been started in 2009 at Ilmenau University of Technology in Germany by Martin Löffelholz and Andreas Schwarz.

In 2012, the working group organized its first ECREA session at the 4th European Communication Conference in Istanbul.

Next elections

Although the Management team is in charge since summer 2011, the next elections cannot be held in 2013, as they could be supposed to be according to the rules of a mandate of 2 year. The elections have to be synchronized with the ECREA conference. Therefore, the next elections will be in 2014, during the 5th ECREA Conference in Lisbon.

The Management Team will start the call for candidates in Spring/Summer 2014. All members of the TWG can be candidates and vote at the elections.

Next conference

The third conference on crisis communication: "Crisis 3: Crossing Boundaries in Crisis Communication" is organized by the TWG on Crisis Communication and the International Research Group on Crisis Communication at Ilmenau University of Technology, and it will take place on October 2-5, 2013.

The conference will include invited speakers, open panels and sections as well as panel discussions with scholars and practitioners. The Call for papers is available at:

<http://www.tu-ilmenau.de/mw/crisis3/>

The proposal of a journal of crisis communication

Tim Sellnow reported about two denials from Francis & Taylor regarding the proposal for a new journal of crisis communication. According to the publisher, scholars already publish studies on crisis communication in existing journals and there seem to be many possibilities (journals) for having research published on this topic.

Tim Sellnow has taken contact to Emerald, one of the leading publishers in Europe, which already publish some journals in the field of communication including the International Journal of Emergency Services and the participants at the Business Meeting encouraged Tim Sellnow to go ahead with this contact, because we still think that there is a need for a proper journal on crisis communication. It was also suggested that the TWG tries to activate some editors of already existing journals (Corporate Communications; Journal of Communication Management) to support the proposal.

Opportunities for Master and PhD students

There was a request from some of the junior participants to involve Master students into the Crisis Communication Conference because the topic is of interest to their education, master thesis work, and their research aspirations

A PhD seminar on Crisis management and crisis communication will be held immediately before the Crisis Communication Conference organized by Finn Frandsen & Winni Johansen (AU) together with Timothy Coombs and Sherry Holladay. Call for this seminar will be sent out beginning of 2013. The TWG members are invited to advertise this opportunity for PhD students in due time.

Networking among members of the TWG on Crisis Communication

In order to strengthen the networking among its members, it was suggested that the TWG shares the mailing list among all participants to the Business Meeting and try to create a Group on LinkedIn

Collaborative research projects

Diana Ingenhoff, University of Fribourg, invites scholars for collaboration on a research project about crisis communication and social media. Please contact her, if you are interested in learning more about this.

Orla Vigsø, Centre for Crisis Communication at Orebro University will check if there crisis communication is an area of interest in the new Europe 2020 funding program.

Activities at the 4th European Communication Conference in Istanbul

The TWG Crisis Communication invited renowned scholars in the field such as Stuart Allan, Arjen Boin, Timothy Coombs, Owen Hargie, Sherry J. Holladay, Deanna Sellnow and Timothy Sellnow to discuss "Challenges for Crisis Communication in the 21st Century" for the panel accorded to the TWG on Crisis Communication.

The panel was a great success: More than 50 people were present at the panel session, and the TWG had a very good response on the topics and the presentations from the participating scholars.