



Annual Report 2009

Return to Ann Mehan Crosse by
January 20, 2010

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Officer or Board position: Board Member at Large: Communications Committee Chair

For Officers and Board members with committees:

Committee members:

Judith Lewis (ex-officio), Alison Jones Montpetit, Leanne Lefler, Lenora Smith, Nan Smith-Blair, Amy Fagan, David L. Stumph (ex-officio)

Committee Goals:

1. Develop new mechanisms to showcase the achievements of members at all levels (students, novice researchers, mid-career and expert scientists) [Function II]
 - a. Update website monthly.
 - b. Maintain the doctoral student page, including the blog
2. Develop an effective and efficient system of communication [Function III]
 - a. Promote sense of community among members via effective communication using website, e-blasts, Southern Connections and SoJNR.
 - b. Evaluate the effectiveness of communication using the member survey.
 - c. Use the feedback from the survey to improve communications.
3. Facilitate connections and collaboration among members [Function III]
 - a. Support networks of people with similar research and knowledge building interests (RIGS) through SOJNR RIG sponsored issues, newsletter updates on RIGS, and website updates.
4. Offer annual conferences in which high quality research with implications for improvements in health and health care delivery is presented. [Function IV]
 - a. Disseminate information regarding standards for review of abstracts and manuscripts in SNRS sponsored programs and publications
 - b. Maintain standards in selection of material for presentation/publication.

Committee Activities and accomplishments:

1. Develop new mechanisms to showcase the achievements of members at all levels (students, novice researchers, mid-career and expert scientists) [Function II]
 - a. Update website monthly.
 - i. Done. Leeann Lefler and Amy Fagan have updated the website on a monthly basis.
 - b. Maintain the doctoral student page, including the blog.
 - i. Done. Amy developed the doctoral student page including the blog.

2. Develop an effective and efficient system of communication [Function III]
 - a. Promote sense of community among members via effective communication using website, e-blasts, Southern Connections and SoJNR.
 - i. Done. Four issues of SOJNR were published; Three issues of the Southern Connections newsletter were published (first time since 2004). E-blasts sent as appropriate; website updated monthly.
 - b. Evaluate the effectiveness of communication using the member survey.
 - i. Please see appendix of this report for a Summary of 2009 Survey Results Related to Communications.
 - c. Use the feedback from the survey to improve communications.
 - i. **This will be done next year.**

3. Facilitate connections and collaboration among members [Function III]
 - a. Support networks of people with similar research and knowledge building interests (RIGS) through SOJNR RIG sponsored issues, newsletter updates on RIGS, and website updates.
 - i. Done. Ethics, Aging, and Qualitative RIGS all sponsored SOJNR issues in 2009. I and several committee members attended the RIG dinner at the 2009 conference and spoke about the need for Chairs to write a brief statement of purpose and philosophy for their RIG, along with any activities they were planning to be posted on the website. Templates were handed out to them to aid in accomplishing this task. As a result, out of 15 RIGS, 11 have something written on their website (other than the name of the chair and co-chair). This represents 73% compliance with our requests – up 40% from 2008.

RIGs with posted information	RIGs with no information
Academic Nurse Managed Centers (ANMC) Aging/Gerontology Evidence-based Practice Psychiatric-Mental Health Community/Public Health Psychometrics Biobehavioral (added summer 09) Health Promotion (added summer 09) Minority health (added summer 09) Parent Child (added summer 09) Qualitative (added summer 09)	Administration Education Ethics Research in Clinical Settings

Beginning in the spring issue of Southern Connections, we began highlighting various RIGS. We also had a RIG update printed in the newsletter by Jennifer Wenzel, Chair of the RIGs for the Board. Leeann Lefler wrote a nice article about RIGS, what they do, their purpose, and how to access the listserves for each of them.

4. Offer annual conferences in which high quality research with implications for improvements in health and health care delivery is presented. [Function IV]
 - a. Disseminate information regarding standards for review of abstracts and manuscripts in SNRS sponsored programs and publications.
 - i. Done. This information was posted primarily in 2 places: the website for abstract reviews and the SOJNR page on the website for the review of manuscripts.
 - b. Maintain standards in selection of material for presentation/publication.
 - i. Done. Judy Lewis, Editor of the SOJNR, is responsible for the outstanding quality of the publication. She has not only increased the quantity of published manuscripts, but has done so with the utmost quality. We are deeply grateful for her service to SNRS. Lenora Smith has produced an increasingly high quality Southern Connections newsletter. It has grown in length and breadth. She has contacted various board members for articles and has judiciously edited them as needed. She has gathered photographs and pieced together the parts of the newsletter. She has added many sections to the newsletter. We are very grateful for her service.

Leeann Lefler and Amy Fagan have both worked very hard on the website, with Leeann being responsible for the whole website and Amy, responsible for the doctoral student page. The quality of the website has dramatically improved this past year thanks to these two committee members. All in all, the communication has improved in quantity and quality in 2009. I am sincerely indebted to the entire committee for their many hours of hard work.

Current or upcoming issues and challenges:

- a. Use the feedback from the survey to improve communications.

APPENDIX

Summary of 2009 Survey Results Related to Communications

Website

When asked **how frequently members visit the website**, the majority responded that they visit the site one to four times per year, while almost 16 percent visit the website once per month. Here are the responses: The number of respondents who indicated that they visit the site monthly is low. We need to continue to drive members to the site for information on the annual meeting, grants, and other services. The broadcast emails that we conduct seem to be a good vehicle for achieving this goal. The Annual Conference appears to be the main reason for members to visit the site, whether it is for registration information, program details, or to submit an abstract. While it is important to maintain this focus, SNRS needs to be proactive in driving members and others to the site. Several suggestions throughout the survey relate to increased value of the grants that are offered. This is one example of an activity that could raise the awareness of SNRS among researchers and drive more traffic to the web.

When combined, very satisfied and somewhat satisfied total 69.4%. While there is room for improvement, this is a good rating. In this environment, web and electronic expectations change quickly. Therefore, we would recommend that an annual intensive review of the site be conducted to ensure that it is as user-friendly as possible. As individuals expect instant communications, it is critical that information be as accessible as possible on the web and that locating details about the meeting, how to join, grant information, etc. be as intuitive as possible.

For the “**what suggestions do you have for improvement of the SNRS Web site**,” question, there were a number of comments indicating that the site was difficult to navigate. There were also comments stating that the site looked “dated” or that we need to be careful to ensure that information is up-to-date. As for suggestions for improvement, here are the highlights:

- Make it more user-friendly and easier to navigate links.
- Would like to see a quick find area so I would not have to hunt for information.
- Make the site navigation more clear.
- More up to date news of the organization.
- Communicate better the information that is available on the web; many were unaware of the information that is on the site.
- Let's redesign the logo.

Southern Connections Newsletter:

55.6% of members were either satisfied or very satisfied with the newsletter. However, since the survey there have been several improvements in the newsletter. 42% read it only when topics look interesting to them and 26.5% read it whenever it is published.

When asked to provide **suggestions to improve the newsletter**, there was very little offered in the way of content. The highlights are as follows:

- Make it an email newsletter.
- Send it by mail, prefer hard copy.
- Broaden topics in each issue.
- Did not know it was available.
- Haven't received it.
- Content blocked by firewall

Email Communications

This area rated well. Members seem to read the email notices and appreciate them when received. There does not seem to be an objection to the frequency of email distribution and the members seem to appreciate that email is an important means of communicating important information. 59.6% of the membership were either satisfied or very satisfied with email communications. 44.6% read the email whenever it arrives and 31.9% read it whenever they feel it will be useful.

Suggestions to improve communications, included:

- More communications via email
- Blogs, wikis, collaborative applications
- Monthly updates from RIGs chairs
- Need to provide routine e-letter with report of current happenings
- Didn't know that communications was a problem
- Greater use of electronic communication
- Offer local opportunities for networking

Southern Online Journal of Nursing Research (SOJNR)

The overall evaluation of this service has improved significantly since the last survey with 64.4 percent of the respondents expressing satisfaction with the journal. 41.3% read the journal whenever it is published and 21.5% read it when relevant citations are found in an electronic search. Of interest is that 70.5% do not submit abstracts to the journal because it is not perceived to be a "top tier journal."

Suggestions offered for improvement included:

- More high quality qualitative research.
- Solicit manuscripts from other regional research groups to fertilize our thinking.
- Comment dialogues not valued.
- Option for hard-copy.
- Making members more aware of this as a publication outlet.
- Publish more frequently.
- Ensure indexing in all relevant databases, including PubMed, Medline.
- Broaden topics in each issue.
- Put energies elsewhere.

While there is some satisfaction for the journal, the primary concerns are for the attitudes expressed by members related to submission of articles and its lack of perceived standing in the scientific community..