CALL FOR PAPERS

Bringing together Social and Semantic Networks in Communication Research

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ICA 2015 Preconference

Co-Sponsored by ICA’s Communication & Technology, Mass Communication & Political Communication Divisions

While the analysis of social networks and semantic networks has quickly advanced over the past years, this development is still weakly received in the communication sciences. Network researchers have developed a whole bouquet of powerful and scalable tools and methods to the analysis of discourse texts and communicative interactions, and first inroads are being cut toward the joint analysis of social and semantic network data. However, these methods’ communication theoretic foundations, as well as their applications for addressing pressing questions in the field are still underdeveloped. Moreover, social and semantic network analytic approaches are most commonly considered separately. Yet, communication processes inevitably include patterns of both social relations and semantic contents, which can often be fruitfully conceptualized as networks. Building upon last year’s preconference on this theme, this event is aimed to connect network analytic methodology with important developments in the field of communication research, such as:

- the rising attention to the semantic substance and meaning of messages and the configuration of different communication content exchanged in public discourses
- the theoretically grounded integration of text and social network data in communication analysis (e.g., in social media communication).
- the rising importance of networked organizations and forms of organizing and communicating with flat hierarchies, a dedifferentiation of communicator roles, and self-organizing publics
- the reconceptualization of existing communication patterns, social structures, institutions, and other in society in terms of interaction networks

The preconference is co-sponsored by the ICA Communication & Technology Division, the ICA Mass Communication Division and the ICA Political Communication Division, but it touches upon the fields of many more ICA divisions and interest groups. The preconference aims to bring together researchers from different backgrounds, including theoretically, methodologically, and practically oriented researchers in diverse fields of application, both inside and outside the academia. It thereby aims to instill a mutual learning process and exchange innovative ideas and challenges for the further development of network analysis in communication research.

We invite contributions that make use of social, semantic, or both types of network analysis to address relevant questions in communication research, to advance network analytic methodology for the study of communication, or to advance communication theory to integrate with network analytic methodology. Specifically, we welcome any contributions that consider how semantic and social relations and processes might be linked or can affect one another (e.g., semantic networks related to social groups or interactions, social networks related to semantic contents or ideas, socio-semantic networks). We are also looking for technological advances in the form of new computational solutions and tool demonstrations.
CONFERENCE FORMAT & SUBMISSIONS (Paper, Data Presentations, Tool Presentations)

Contributions can come from a wide variety of disciplinary backgrounds, but should relate to both network analytic methodology and communication science research questions and/or theory. Submissions will be evaluated according to their innovative potential, methodological quality, and contribution to communication science research. In addition to more classic research presentations, we explicitly invite tool- and data sharing.

In addition to more classic research presentations, we explicitly invite the sharing of network-analytic tools and data, which can be presented in a especially dedicated high-density demonstration session). These demonstrations serve to introduce new software tools (open access tools privileged) for applying network analysis in communication science research, and open access data sets available to the research community (e.g., “big data” with network-analytic potential).

Submissions for a regular presentation should be original papers of approximately 4000 to 8000 words, which have not been published elsewhere. In an accompanying abstract of 150 words, they should emphasize the specific contribution of their paper to advancing network analytic research and theory in communications.

Submissions for the high-density demonstration session should provide extended abstracts (1000 to 1500 words) that introduce the data or tool presented. As far as applicable, these abstracts should also state the conditions of use of the presented tool or data for other researchers.

All submissions must be uploaded to https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=netcom2015 by January 11, 2015, with all identifying information removed from the manuscript or abstract. All contributions will be blindly peer-reviewed, and acceptance notifications will be sent out before the end of February 2015.

Registration for the preconference is open to both presenters and non-presenters and opens on January 15, 2015. Registration fees are 60 USD for students (graduate, doctoral) and 100 USD for both faculty (PhD holders) and practitioners outside the academia. The preconference will take place on Thursday, May 21, 2015, at one of the two conference hotels of the 65th ICA Annual conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

For any direct inquiries regarding this preconference, please contact any of the following:

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TENTATIVE PROGRAM

09:00 – 09:15 Welcome & introduction
09:15 – 10:30 Paper session 1 (3 papers, 25 min each: 15-20 min talk, 10-5 min Q&A)
10:30 – 11:00 Break
11:00 – 12:15 High-density session (6-7 tool-/data-demonstrations, 10 min each: 5 min talk, 5 min Q&A)
12:15 – 13:15 Lunch (off site)
13:15 – 14:30 Paper session 2 (3 papers, 25 min each: 15-20 min talk, 10-5 min Q&A)
14:30 – 15:00 Coffee break
15:00 – 16:15 Paper session 3 (3 papers, 25 min each: 15-20 min talk, 10-5 min Q&A)
16:15 – 17:00 Roundtable Discussion: Challenges and Future Directions

This preconference is kindly supported by [Network Institute](http://www.networkinstitute.org)