

# SIGDOC Annual Report

July 2015 - June 2016

Submitted by: Liza Potts, SIGDOC Chair

***(1) Promote the professional development of technical communication practitioners, researchers, and educators; (2) Encourage interdisciplinary approaches to solving communication problems related to online and print documentation and to human-computer interfaces; (3) Provide avenues for publication and for the exchange of professional information; (4) Support research that focuses on the needs of humans and their goals and tasks in technological contexts; (5) Support the development and improvement of computer-supported communication technologies.***

SIGDOC has continued to build upon its success over the past three years and distinguish the SIG in the DOC community. This report highlights SIGDOC activities, awards, publications, and conferences that support this work.

**1. Awards Given Out.** This year, SIGDOC gave out the Diana Award to Women in Technical Communication for their contributions to the field of communication design. We honored the founders of this organization during our 2015 conference, and they delivered the keynote. Their work has united women across our three major field organizations (SIGDOC, Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication (CPTSC), and the Association for Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW). Through their work, a network has been established to support women in their roles as academics from graduate students to emeritus faculty.

**2. Significant Papers on New Areas that Were Published in Proceedings.** SIGDOC continues to build up a strong library of proceedings papers and articles from its peer-reviewed publication, *Communication Design Quarterly* (CDQ). Recent significant papers and research include:

1. Responsive, mobile app, mobile first: untangling the UX design web in practical experience by Cheri Mullins
2. Digital badges for deliberate practice: designing effective badging systems for interactive communication scenarios by Joseph R. Fanfarelli, Rudy McDaniel
3. Target data breach: applying user-centered design principles to data breach notifications by Fer O'Neil
4. The communication design of WeChat: ideological as well as technical aspects of social media by Xiaobo Wang, Baotong Gu
5. Are personas really usable? By Tharon W. Howard

### **3. Innovative Programs which Provided Service and Broadened Participation**

*Working with Leaders Across Technical Communication and Co-Locating Conferences.* We have created partnerships across the field. We are leaders in this area, and our conferences have been successful in part because of this cooperation. We are co-locating conferences, meeting with leaders at their

conferences, and holding conference calls to discuss our goals and share ideas. In 2015, we co-located our conference with IEEE's ProComm conference in Ireland. This allowed us to connect with scholars who might not have normally thought of SIGDOC as a place to publish and present. Our members participated in and worked with the CPTSC to coordinate an international Round Table meeting of technical and professional communication scholars in Ireland during that same time. We know that this collaboration increased our attendance and reach based on feedback from our members and field leaders.

*Encouraging Diverse Leadership and Mentoring Junior Scholars.* SIGDOC is committed to leading our field and ACM as a space for diversity and mentorship. We are a welcoming organization, proud of our growth and support of diverse and junior scholars on our our Board, our committees, our conference program, and CDQ. Our Chair will nominate several new members to our board with a focus on diversity. SIGDOC was one of the earliest supporters of Women in Technical Communication, an organization in our field dedicated to supporting women in the academy. We continued to host a breakfast for them at our conference, and we awarded them the Diana Award.

*Microsoft Student Competition.* At our 2015 conference at the University of Limerick in Ireland, we hosted our first-annual Microsoft-sponsored SIGDOC's Student Research Competition (SRC). We had a remarkable number of graduate and undergraduate students participating, including 28 students who submitted proposals and 11 students who participated in the competition. We had 30 faculty reviewers of abstracts and 15 additional faculty during the competitions at the conference.

*Supporting the Annual Symposium on Communicating Complex Information.* We continued to support this conference in 2015. Their proceedings are part of ACM's Digital Library because of this collaboration, increasing our reach and sharing knowledge across our communities.

#### **4. A Very Brief Summary of Key Issues the SIG within the Next 2-3 years**

*Increase visibility of SIGDOC within the field to build and strengthen our member base.*

- We have appointed a dedicated social media manager to make visible the work our SIG is doing and that members can learn from and stay connected through
- We are developing robust materials to distribute at affiliated conferences and faculty
- We are holding our conferences in interesting places (Ireland last year, Washington DC this year, Halifax next year) and co-locating them with other organizations and groups.

*Establish the Publication Communication Design Quarterly as a journal with ACM*

- An editorial board and guidelines for the publication and peer review process is in place
- A publication schedule for 2016 through the first issue of 2018 (an 18+ month backlog of content) has been established and content for these issues has been secured
- An active campaign about CDQ as a publication venue in field has begun

*Improve the quantity and visibility of quality of research*

- We are continuing to publicize the Microsoft SRC, a unique competition and source of research support within the technical communication community
- We are continuing our second-annual Research Network Forum at our conference for participants to share their research-in-progress in a supportive setting
- We are building our publication into a reputable journal in the technical communication and user experience fields by attracting reputable scholars and quality research

#### **5. Volunteer Development Process**

SIGDOC is very focused on developing volunteers. The Board is active in mentoring scholars in our field, with the goal of having them running for office, leading special issues of CDQ, and working across our field in leadership roles. We use CDQ to engage in mentoring and development activities for production and development roles, mentoring junior scholars in the publishing process. Many of these represent a new pool of volunteer talent we have developed.