



CALL FOR PAPERS

Professional Communication, Social Justice, and the Global South

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Professional communicators are working all over the world. They practice in business, industry, government, charitable non-profit organizations, non-governmental organizations, and intergovernmental organizations. And yet, nearly all of the research on international professional communication has focused on corporate contexts in the “developed” world. Consequently, international technical communication practice and research tends to focus on barely more than half of the world’s nations included in the 2013 United Nations Human Development Index. These are nations ranked as “very high” or “high” on the human development scale. Only a few nations ranked as “medium” receive much notice—China, Thailand, Philippines, and South Africa are the most prominent.

Many of the nations regarded as “low” on the Human Development Index are sites of transnational corporate activity, of which a significant amount involves various kinds of resource development of questionable benefit to the people of those nations. However, a number of NGOs throughout the world pay close attention to the unfair, unjust, and environmentally detrimental activities of exploitative transnational corporations among indigenous and marginalized populations. These NGOs’ work includes research, legal action, and extensive documentation. Many transnational corporations also document their development and other business activities in sensitive areas of the world, some of them for purposes of accountability for their efforts at corporate social responsibility, others for purposes of denying or whitewashing egregious activities.

Only a handful of studies in professional communication, published over the past fifteen years, have addressed these issues (Agboka, 2013a, 2013b; Dura, Singhal, & Elias, 2013; Ilyasova & Birkelo, 2013; Vijayaram, 2013; Smith, 2006, 2012; Walton & DeRenzi, 2009; Walton, 2013; Walton, Price, & Zrally, 2013). This is especially troubling, considering that a wide range of other professions have given extensive attention to their roles in development activities among unenfranchised populations—such professions as engineering, medicine, agriculture, economics, business management, computer science, and geography. Professional communication scholars and practitioners have taken great pride in the part played by communication professionals in all of these fields, but too little research/scholarship in professional communication has kept pace with the global social consciousness these other fields have demonstrated for many years regarding the impacts of their work beyond the industrialized Global North. This special issue attempts to address this need.

For this special issue we seek articles, commentaries, teaching cases, and reviews focusing on research studies, corporate, NGO, or government documentation relating to fair practices, environmental and social justice, and human rights in what is variously referred to as the Third and Fourth Worlds, Developing Countries, or the Global South. “Global South” and “Fourth World” are terms intended to include populations that are not necessarily in the southern hemisphere and that also do not include only nation states. Thus, the terms can include populations within “First World” nations, including the U.S. We especially seek proposals from scholars and practitioners who are indigenous to Global South populations or whose work connects with or affects populations in the Global South. The issue will also include several interviews with practitioners who are working in or with Global South populations.

Suggested **topic areas** include, but are not limited to:

- Intercultural research that takes place in Global South contexts
- Localization and translation for audiences in Global South sites
- Intersections of globalization and localization, and their associated challenges
- Workplace practices that impact specific Global South contexts
- Ethics in the context of the Global South
- Corporate, NGO, or other organizations’ documentation practices in Global South contexts
- Curriculum design perspectives that address Global South perspectives
- The complexities of cross-cultural collaborations between Global South and Global North team members or among teams distributed across Global South cultures.
- Crisis communication in the contexts of the Global South
- Social justice implications of technology deployment and uses in the Global South

Proposals to be developed into

- Original research articles of 5,000 to 7,000 words of body text.
- Review articles of 3,000 to 5,000 words of body text.
- Focused commentary and industry perspectives articles of 500 to 3,000 words of body text.
- Teaching cases of 3,000 to 5,000 words of body text (**deadline for submissions of manuscript proposals** is February 15, 2015).

Submission procedures:

- Cover page containing your name, institutional affiliation, and email address.
- Prepare the cover page and manuscript with 1.5 line spacing and Times New Roman, 12-point font.
- 500-word proposal for original research articles, review articles, and teaching cases; 250-word proposals for focused commentary and industry perspectives.
- All submissions will be reviewed by at least two readers, whether you are submitting a research article, a review article, industry perspective article, or teaching case.
- Submit via email to Gerald Savage: gjsavag@ilstu.edu or Godwin Agboka: agbokag@uhd.edu
- Proposals should be sent as a .docx, .doc, or .rtf file attached to an email message with the subject line: "Proposal for Special Issue on Professional Communication, Social Justice, and the Global South."

Schedule

- Submission deadline for manuscript proposals: February 15, 2015
- Notification of proposal acceptances: March 15, 2015
- Submission deadline for first drafts of full manuscripts: June 15, 2015
- Submission deadline for revised drafts of manuscripts: November 1, 2015
- Expected date of publication: February 28, 2016.

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