

## Report for ACL 2007 Student Research Workshop

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### 1. Program Committee

The co-chairs of the ACL 2007 Student Research Workshop are Violeta Seretan (University of Geneva, Switzerland) and Chris Biemann (University of Leipzig, Germany). Ellen Riloff (University of Utah, USA) is the Faculty Advisor. The program committee was formed by the co-chairs by asking previous SRW reviewers, previous SRW participants and other researchers from the community. The final program committee consists of 52 reviewers, of which 26 were students or young researchers and 26 were senior researchers.

### 2. Paper Submission and Acceptance

We received 52 submissions from 22 countries (see Table 1). All papers were assigned 3 reviewers (at least 1 senior and 1 student reviewer). We accepted 16 papers, of which 9 are regular (oral) presentations and 7 are posters.

Country/Region	submissions	accepted
Brazil	1	-
China	6	-
Czech Republic	1	-
France	6	-
Germany	3	-
Hungary	1	1
Italy	1	-
India	2	-
Iran	1	-
Ireland	3	2
Nepal	1	-
New Zealand	1	1
The Netherlands	2	2
Palestine	1	-
Poland	3	2
Russia	1	-
Spain	2	-
Sweden	3	1
Switzerland	2	1
UK	6	4
Ukraine	1	-
USA	4	2
TOTAL	52	16

Table 1: Submission and acceptance by countries

### 3. Presentation Format

The Student Research Workshop posters are included together with the main conference poster session on Day 1 of ACL. We made sure that the student posters are presented next to the main conference posters, and can be kept hanging the whole conference.

The regular (oral) presentations are held as a parallel track on site on Day 2. Each oral presentation consists of 15 minutes of talk, and 5 minutes each for panelist feedback and for general audience questions.

### 4. Panelists

The co-chairs asked senior conference attendees to be on the panel to provide feedback to student authors. All papers received one or two panelists. These 19 panelists were selected for their knowledge in the area and availability during the workshop.

### 5. Funding

We submitted our request to the National Science Foundation in January 2007 and received the award in April 2007. The grant totaled \$22,200, of which \$18,000 was budgeted for student travel and \$4,200 was budgeted for administrative costs associated with running the workshop (e.g., facility rentals, workshop proceedings, student lunch). We will be able to provide funds to every SRW participant. Because the cost of traveling to Prague varies depending on the student's location, the level of funding is determined based on the cost of travel. We will award a guaranteed \$800 in funds to students from Europe, \$1,800 to students from North America and \$2,000 for students from Australia/New Zealand. The rest of \$2,000 will be used to cover the student co-chairs registration and will serve as a buffer for extra expenses. The remaining funds will be allocated to those students that did not manage to cover all costs with their allotted funds.

### 6. Organization and Planning

The Workshop was publicized by sending CFPs to mailing lists of computational linguistics and related fields, as well as direct emails to professors at various departments. The availability of funding appears to be an important incentive for submissions, and we found it was important to include some funding information on the CFPs. The Workshop webpage was placed prominently on the main conference website. In addition, the ACL Newsletters helped to disseminate information on the Student Research Workshop. We are grateful to the main conference organizers for the support. The entire submission and review process was managed by the START system. This system proved immensely helpful for managing the 52 submissions and 52 reviewers. Before sending out acceptance and reject letters, we double-checked with the main conference organizers to avoid double acceptance. We rejected two papers that have been published at other events without considerable changes.

### 7. Suggestions and Considerations

a) We believe that the success of the Student Research Workshop depends on the quality of the reviewer and panelist feedback to students. We were happy to find 52 reviewers and 19 panelists who are supportive of this educational goal. The community was very responsive, which shows that the Student Research Workshop is widely accepted and recognized. Also for students whose work could not be accepted, the elaborate reviews will be of great help. We recommend that future Workshop organizers continue the tradition of concentrating their efforts on assembling good reviewers and panelists.

b) For many Workshop presenters, this is their first major conference attendance. Therefore, we thought it would be beneficial for students if we could arrange their poster/regular sessions early during the conference, such that they can begin networking and get the most out of the duration of the conference. We suggest that future Workshop planners communicate with the main conference organizers in the early stages of planning to ensure that the logistics for this situation works out. Both oral and poster presentations were scheduled and located to make the SRW look like a part of the main conference rather than a separate event. We believe this is beneficial for the students, as they get more attention from the general audience.

c) This year, the submission deadline as well as the notification of acceptance for the SRW was set to be at the same time as that of the main conference. We did receive papers that indicated double submissions, but not to ACL main session and the SRW. Although we clearly stated that double submission has to be labelled as such, some students did not consider previously published papers as double submissions and found it hard to understand why their papers were rejected once we found out by manually checking the web. In the future, this point should be made even more explicit in the Call for Papers.

d) We set the camera-ready deadline one week before the deadline for the main conference. As nearly all papers needed adjustments, which took until two weeks past the deadline to finish, this proved to be a necessary means that is highly recommended to the next organizers.

e) In the Call for Papers, we aimed at early stage Ph.D. work and suggested that advanced students should submit to the main conference. We believe this is a necessary contrast to NAACL's Doctoral Consortium, and suggest to do so in subsequent years. However, about half of the submissions were at too early a stage and could not even fill 4 out of a maximum number of 6 pages, which imposed extra work on reviewers, as most of these papers were clear rejects both formally and by content. We suggest to provide a minimum page number in the Call for Papers to avoid this.

f) Since our funding came from the National Science Foundation, in order for students to be reimbursed for their airfare their flights had to comply with the Fly America Act. This essentially means that the flights have to be on a U.S. carrier or code-shared by a U.S. carrier, unless no such options are available (there are a few exceptions, primarily when the travel time would be dramatically increased). This caused some confusion among students, especially those traveling entirely within Europe, because they weren't sure if there were any "acceptable" flights or because the acceptable flights were a lot more expensive than an "unacceptable" flight. Our solution was to run their flight plans by a travel agent at the University of Utah who determined whether their flights were acceptable or not. However, this solution introduced lag time before the students could book their flights and it was a bit cumbersome for the travel agent.