

CT&M CONCEPTS

ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION IN JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION

March on down to Norman

Gaylord College set to host Midwinter Conference

MICHEL HAIGH
 PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
 CT&M MIDWINTER CONFERENCE
 PROGRAM CHAIR & PAPER
 COMPETITION CHAIR

Communication Theory and Methodology will be among the divisions participating in the 2009 Midwinter AEJMC Conference. The conference will be at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Okla. by the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass

will notify participants by January 10, 2009, if their paper/panel was accepted.

Paper submissions: Authors should submit research paper proposals consisting of a 300- to 500-word abstract to the relevant contact person. The abstracts should give a clear sense

of the scope of the research and the method of inquiry used. Authors of proposals accepted for presentation at the conference must submit complete research papers, not exceeding 30 pages, to their discussant two weeks prior to the conference.

Panel submissions: Panel organizers should submit proposals to the relevant division/interest group/commission contact person indicating the panel title, a description of the session's focus, the issues to be discussed, and a list of panelists (potential and confirmed), including affiliation.

Format: Identify the paper's author(s) or panel's organizer(s) on the title page only and include the mailing

address, telephone number and e-mail address of the person to whom inquiries should be addressed. The title should be on the first page of the text and on running heads on each page of text. Include your abstract or proposal as an attachment in a standard word-processing format (preferably Word or RTF). Also, please ensure that you remove any identifying information from your document (with the exception of the title page).

Registration: Details on conference registration, hotel accommodation, and travel information will be available at <http://www.>

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The campus of the University of Oklahoma awaits Midwinter Conference participants

Communication. CT&M members are encouraged to submit proposals for the conference and attend the event. It provides an excellent additional venue for presenting research. In past years, CT&M has represented a major portion of the event, providing sessions in which innovative graduate student and faculty studies were presented.

This year, 12 AEJMC divisions, interest groups and commissions are participating in the conference, scheduled for March 6-8. All abstracts and panel proposals must be e-mailed to the appropriate division/interest group/commission's midwinter paper chair by December 13, 2008. Midwinter paper chairs

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DOUGLAS BLANKS HINDMAN
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CT&M DIVISION HEAD

As incoming division head, I'd like to offer a few goals for the Communication Theory and Methodology division:

1. Financial stability. Our division, for the first time in recent history, went into the red just before the annual conference. **Rich Burke**, AEJMC Business Manager, assured us that dues payments brought us back into the black soon after. But the fact remains that our Division is spending more than it earns in membership dues. In the short run, the Executive Board will need to cut costs to bring our books back into balance.

The publisher of Communication Methods and Measures must inform us by July of 2009 if it intends to raise the subscription fees. If necessary, a vote to raise subscription fees (\$21/\$13 for regular/student members), or the \$5/\$3 dues for regular /student members will be put to a vote at the next Members' Meeting in Boston.

2. Journal relations. **Andrew Hayes**, one of the founders and Associate Editors of Communication Methods & Measures has agreed to serve in a newly-created position for our Division: Journal Liaison. Andrew will appear with the publisher's representative at the Members' Meeting to discuss the journal's accomplishments and to answer questions.

3. Member relations. **Jason Reinecke**, past Membership/Recruitment Chair, and **Myiah Hively**, current Grad Student Liaison, produced an outstanding analysis of membership data including an original survey of CT&M members. Those results were presented during the members' meeting, and are online at <http://www.comm.ohio-state.edu/ahayes/ctm/membership.pdf>. Concerns raised in that report regarding a lack of awareness of the blog and problems with the listserv are being addressed by **Ed Horowitz** (current Membership/Recruitment Chair) and **Glenn Leshner** (listserv manager).

4. Division structure/bylaws. Our Division voted on a new structure which will be implemented over the next two years. We need to formalize those decisions by creating a set of Division Bylaws. I've received copies of the bylaws of other divisions, and will circulate a draft of the proposed CT&M bylaws among the Executive Board before the next Annual Conference.

5. Division image/state of the field. **Maria Len-Rios**, CT&M Past President, wrote an insightful essay about the "State of the Field" from the CT&M perspective for then AEJMC President Charles Self. That essay was sent to a Strategic Planning Implementation Committee charged with addressing the challenges and opportunities that face AEJMC.

Len-Rios' essay raised important points about CT&M's reputation as a research-driven division. Now, AEJMC members who are serious about research can find a number of divisions that are also receptive to their work.

What makes CT&M special? For one thing, our Division's association with Communication Methods & Measures helps solidify CT&M's reputation as the gold standard for research. The journal itself will draw new members, given the steep discount we receive for individual subscriptions (\$21 vs. \$64).

Another thing that makes CT&M unique is its close connection with current published research. Audience members attend CT&M sessions expecting get up-to-date on a number of research programs, but to also see what will be in the journals for months to come.

Finally, CT&M is about people. At the annual conference, established scholars meet and encourage new scholars. Grad school buddies re-connect. Collaborators plan future studies. Those in the job market find out who is hiring. People get excited about their research and their careers, and leave the conference energized and motivated to face another school year.

Our goal is to make sure that CT&M is financially and organizationally stable, connected with the journal and members, and carrying on the tradition of excellence in research for a long time to come.

CT&M sessions in Chicago prove successful

CTEC Program Chair **Jimmy Ivory**, CT&M Division Head **Maria Len-Rios** and I took a risk last December when we scheduled two joint-sponsored panels for back-to-back Wednesday morning sessions of the 2008 Annual Conference. But the gamble paid off with strong attendance and engaged audience members.

The CT&M sessions at the 2008 conference began at 8:15 Wednesday with a spirited and well-attended (22) teaching panel on the legal liabilities and costs associated with SecondLife.com, co-sponsored with CTEC. We continued at 10 a.m. in the same room with a standing room only (52 attendees) PF&R panel on blogging, organized by **Dhavan Shah** and co-sponsored with CTEC. The success of both of those early morning panels was primarily due to interest in the topics and the quality of the presenters.

Maria and I took another risk in scheduling a high density research session in which eight scholars each presented five minute summaries of their papers and then joined a roundtable

discussion with an expert discussant, other presenters, and interested audience members. This session drew 47 attendees. Thanks to **Bruce Pinkleton**, **John Pollock**, and **Tom Johnson** for serving as discussants and making this session a success.

To insure that each poster presenter would have interaction with at least one informed and interested audience member, we invited discussants to serve groups of poster presenters. Thanks to **Julie Andsager**, **Fiona Chew**, **Stacey Hust**, **Wayne Wanta**, **Sri Kalyanaraman**, and **Dennis Lowry** for serving discussant duties in the poster session and for helping our presenters have a good experience with CT&M.

The other session discussants were also committed to helping the audiences become engaged with the sophisticated research that our Division attracts. Thanks to **Erica Austin**, **Jim Ettema**, **Kurt Neuwirth**, **Brian Southwell**, **Weiwu Zhang**, **Shyam Sundar**, and **Michel Haigh** for outstanding discussant duties for CT&M.

*DOUGLAS BLANKS HINDMAN
WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
CT&M DIVISION HEAD*

Panelists ponder how to effectively teach theory

This year, one of the panels our Division sponsored at AEJMC was a teaching panel called "Teaching Theory in Skills Classes." The panelists included **Cory Armstrong**, assistant professor from the University of Florida; **Brad Gorham**, assistant professor from Syracuse University; **Sheila M. Webb**, assistant professor from Western Washington University; and **Bryan E. Denham**, the Charles Campbell Professor of Sports Communication at Clemson University.

Several issues were raised during the conversation. One was how an instructor can find time to cover theory in skills classes. There was a debate with the audience that teaching the skills (e.g., writing, editing, layout/design, photography) is more important than incorporating the theory into the classes because of limited time. The panelists all provided excellent ideas on how to incorporate history and theory into the lessons they teach in their respective skills classes. Some examples include: having the students write communication theory papers and explain how that theory will be used in their public relations or journalism careers; discussing the importance of gate keeping and agenda setting in journalism classes; working with students to recognize how their writing can be impacted by different communication theories; and discussing the theory and history behind photography or web design. In the end, there should be a way to incorporate communication theory into the assignments already being employed in skills classes.

Another issue discussed was "what if students don't like the theory and this ends up on the class

evaluations." The panelists agreed that exposing students to communication theory was more important than worrying if the students liked it or not. Exposing students to theory will help them with their critical thinking skills, which are necessary for surviving in the job market. The audience members felt the students would not like the theory, but the panelists agreed their students have enjoyed being exposed to different communication theories, albeit sometimes with different labels. The students enjoyed learning how people process messages or the differences in story frames. To students, the word "theory" may seem intimidating or boring. However, there are ways to make theory more accessible and stimulating. One possible solution is to show to students how they can find real-world applications of the theory. Explaining the theory in concrete, personal examples is also effective.

It was apparent at the end of the session, there were a number of people who still struggled with how to incorporate theory into their skills classes. There has to be a way to bridge the gap between the theoretical and the practical, something many journalism schools are addressing. Given that we are a division of theory (and methodology), it is particularly critical to convey to the members who currently teach in a communication program the importance of incorporating theory in skills class. The CT&M Division should continue to provide guidance in this area. The discussion that took place in August was only the beginning. There is a need to provide instructors ideas on how to include theory in skills classes.

*XIAOLI NAN
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
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PROGRAM CHAIR & PAPER
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Understanding PF&R important for members

JASON REINEKE
MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
CT&M PROFESSIONAL FREEDOM &
RESPONSIBILITY CHAIR

Talk with very many people for very long about AEJMC, and you're bound to eventually hear someone ask what exactly "Professional Freedom and Responsibility" (PF&R) means. Indeed, it's not unheard of for even elected officers to be unclear about the meaning of PF&R. But the question "What does PF&R mean?" is easy enough to answer. When our current division head, **Douglas Blanks Hindman**, was the PF&R chair, he wrote a helpful explanation of PF&R within the context of our division for this very newsletter. There's an archive of CT&M Concepts newsletters on the division blog – <http://aejmcctm.blogspot.com/> – you'll find Doug's article in the fall, 2004 edition.

As a refresher, Article VI, Section 5 of the AEJMC Constitution establishes the association's standing committee on PF&R as being "...particularly concerned with freedom of expression legally and intellectually, ethical issues among media educators and practitioners, media criticism and accountability, minority affairs, and liaisons between educators and professionals."

The association has recently expounded upon that definition. At our 2008 meeting, the AEJMC membership approved a new Code of Ethics. The Preamble and Core Values section of that document states that PF&R "encompasses research, teaching, and service" and that "Service in support of professional freedom and responsibility is an essential expectation of every AEJMC member. Members work in support of the principles of professional freedom and responsibility within this organization, at our home institutions, and in society at large."

The four most important PF&R principles as recognized by the Code of Ethics are accountability, fidelity and truth telling, justice, and caring. In terms of accountability, AEJMC members are expected, individually, together, and with their students, to evaluate, and analyze the media, and encourage media accountability and ethics. We're also expected to "...nurture promote, and protect free expression..." and to "...work to improve the understanding of free expression intellectually, historically, and legally" as means of promoting fidelity and truth telling. AEJMC's commitment to justice in the context of PF&R involves working in the interest of racial, gender, and cultural inclusiveness in curricula, hiring, and the media – especially for groups that have tradition-

ally been excluded. Caring means that we "... offer services related to our appropriate professional fields, particularly activities that enhance understanding among media educators, professionals, and the general public."

Since many CT&M members are scientists, it's understandable if some of us bristle at the idea of promoting particular values through our work. However, there are clear PF&R issues for even the most objective pursuits. In a general sense, anyone who has recently had to complete one of those online training courses to be heard by and IRB is aware of the myriad of ethical considerations that social scientists must keep in mind. With regard to the specific PF&R considerations laid out by AEJMC, the findings of our research may be used by the public and policy makers to make decisions regarding media accountability – in cases where anything from accolades to scorn to prosecution may be deserved. We all have a responsibility to tell the truth when reporting our research. And we have, and should work to protect, the freedom to express our professional opinions in our classes, amongst our colleagues, and in the public forum. It's always a good idea to make sure that we don't, because of assumptions, omissions, or simple laziness, find ourselves negligent by excluding marginalized population from our research. And of course we should always be ready to take advantage of "teachable moments" as instructors, researchers, and public figures.

As we work to determine the best use of our sessions at the 2009 conference, I encourage you to contact me if you have any thoughts about specific PF&R-related issues that might make for good discussion topics, and people who might be able to provide informative perspectives on those issues. We'll be sending out a more formal invitation for proposals shortly, but you'll be ahead of the crowd if you send your session proposals in sooner rather than later!

Gaylord College set to host Midwinter Conference

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ou.edu/gaylord. Blocks of rooms have been reserved at the Sooner Suites, The Best Western Norman Inn & Suites, the Sooner Legends Inn & Suites under the reservation code "AEJMC Midwinter Conference."

AEJMC Midwinter Paper Calls by Division/
Interest group/Commission

Communication Technology Division

Homero Gil de Zuniga, University of Texas -
Austin (hgz@mail.utexas.edu) 512.471.6323

Communication Theory and Methodology Division

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University (mmh25@psu.edu) 814.863.3850

Commission on the Status of Women

Barbara Barnett, University of Kansas
(barnettb@ku.edu) 785.864.7659

Cultural and Critical Studies Division

Jane Marcellus, Middle Tennessee State
University (jmarcell@mtsu.edu) 615.898.5282

Entertainment Studies Interest Group

Brad Yates, University of West Georgia
(byates@westga.edu) 678.839.4938

Graduate Education Interest Group

Jessalynn Strauss, University of Oregon
(jstrauss@uoregon.edu) 541.346.4169

International

Amy Schmitz Weiss, San Diego University
(digitalamy.sw@gmail.com) 619.594.6301

Mass Communication & Society

Janet A. Bridges, Sam Houston State
University (JABridges@shsu.edu) 936.294.3651

Media Management and Economics

Hugh Martin, University of Georgia



Conference participants may also find time to relax on the Oklahoma campus.

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Visual Communication

Jennifer George-Palilonis, Ball State
University (Jageorge2@bsu.edu) 765.285.8216

CT&M members asked to submit panel proposals

We invite each CT&M member to submit proposals for joint sessions in the areas of Teaching and Professional Freedom & Responsibility (PF&R). The deadline for submitting one-page proposals is Sunday, Oct. 19.

We can't guarantee that every panel idea will ultimately be adopted, but sending your ideas along will definitely help in putting together a roster of panels that reflects the interests and strengths of our division.

We are particularly interested in panels that span divisions, as co-sponsored panels are the norm.

For programming ideas for teaching sessions, please go to: http://aejmc.org/_officers/officer_resources/teaching/programming_ideas.php.

For programming ideas for PF&R sessions, please go to: http://aejmc.org/_officers/officer_

resources/pfr/pfr_sessiontips.php

If you would like to propose a panel, please send your proposal by Sunday, Oct. 19 to dbrossard@wisc.edu including the information listed below.

Thanks for your support to CT&M.

Communication Theory & Methodology Division

Panel organizer contact: (Your name/email)

Panel Title::

Panel Type: (Please specify one): Panel Research; PF&R; Teaching

Possible Co-sponsors: (please list the Division name(s))

Summary of Session: (one paragraph)

Possible Panelists: (please specify if confirmed)

Estimated Speaker Costs:

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