

# Annual Report 2005-2006

## Mass Communication & Society Division

### **1. Officers**

#### **Division Head**

Jennifer Greer  
University of Nevada, Reno

#### **Vice Head**

Marie Hardin  
Pennsylvania State University

#### **Immediate Past Head**

H. Denis Wu  
Louisiana State University

#### **Secretary/Newsletter Editor**

Jean Kelly  
Otterbein College

#### **Professional Freedom & Responsibility**

Timothy Bajkiewicz  
University of South Florida

#### **Research co-chairs**

Janet A. Bridges  
Sam Houston State University

Diana Knott Martinelli  
West Virginia University

#### **Teaching Standards co-chairs**

Jennifer J. Fleming  
California State University, Long Beach

Jennifer Henderson,  
Trinity University

#### **Midwinter research/conference co-coordinators**

Frank Dardis  
Pennsylvania State University

Fuyuan Shen  
Pennsylvania State University

#### **Webmaster**

Tom Gould  
Kansas State University

#### **Graduate Student Liaison**

Nicole Smith  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

### **2. The [demographic form](#) is attached**

### **3. Weighting of activities**

As in the previous year, the division during 2005-2006, put roughly equal weight on teaching, research, and PF&R. Activities for each area are described below.

### **4. Goals for 2006-2007**

The goals of the incoming division head were met this year. The division continued its participation in the Midwinter convention and is set to host the meeting in Reno in February 2007, with our immediate past head as host coordinator. We moved to an online paper competition, having a system developed by ConfMaster to facilitate electronic

submission. This was fortuitous as our record 203 submissions would have been nearly impossible to handle by mail. This also saved the research chair's institution quite a bit of money in postage. The cost of setting up the system was modest compared with these savings. The last stated goal was to publish the newsletter online rather than by mail. After a lengthy discussion at the 2005 members meeting, however, the division decided it was better to retain the print version while publishing the newsletter in a PDF format online. Our Webmaster, Tom Gould, also published it online in HTML and in a Flashpaper format that resembled HTML. <http://www.aejmc-mcs.org/newsletters/0601/flashpaper.html>. This accomplished the goal of making the newsletter easily accessible online while retaining the printed version.

Two unstated goals achieved in 2005-2006 of note are 1) the awarding of the first-ever research award funding by *Mass Communication & Society's* reserve fund and 2) continuing the special themed research call and invited research/PR&R session concept. In 2004-2005, Division Head Denis Wu concentrated on "Ethnic/Minority Media in American Society"; this year Division Head Jennifer Greer focused on "Social Divides and Mass Media" – writing two newsletter Headnotes on the topic, sponsoring a special research competition, and organizing a PR&R/Competitive Research panel on the topic for the San Francisco Convention.

The incoming division head, Marie Hardin, plans to pursue the following goals:

- Forge a successful working relationship between the division, the new journal editor (to be announced later this summer) and the journal's publisher.
- Lead the redesign of MC&S Website and its transition to AEJMC server. Work with officers to ensure that information on Website is updated in a consistent and timely manner.
- Ensure that the newsletter and listserv both provide useful, timely information for the MC&S membership.
- Coordinate celebration of division's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary via the Website, newsletter, midwinter meeting and national convention in Washington, D.C.
- Coordinate the division's efforts with those of past division head Jennifer Greer to take a leading role in AEJMC Midwinter meeting in Reno, Nev.
- Continue the special-themed research call (and coordinated PF&R panel) at the Washington, D.C.
- Explore ways to better publicize activities and opportunities available through the division, such as the new research award and teaching awards and the special research competition to draw high quality applicants.
- Build a strong pool of division volunteers who are prepared to move into primary leadership positions (including co-chair slots for positions with heavy responsibilities, such as research) within MC&S in subsequent years.
- Work with the research chairs to ensure that the second year of online paper competition goes smoothly (See #12.).

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## **RESEARCH:**

### **5. Number of faculty research paper submissions**

110; number of acceptances 50; 45.45%.

MC&S identified the top three faculty papers (those in which the first author was a faculty member) in the faculty paper competition. The first place winner will be given cash award and a plaque at the 2006 AEJMC convention; the second and third place winners receive a certificate.

### **6. Number of student research paper submissions**

93; number of acceptances 30; 32.25%.

MC&S conducted a general student paper competition, awarding cash prizes to the top three student papers. In addition, the division continued the annual Moeller student paper competition, awarding a top prize to the best paper written by a student for a class project. These two awards help recruit young researchers from a variety of backgrounds into MC&S.

### **7. Overview of judging process (forms used, please attach)**

The division received a total of 203 papers submitted electronically to our paper competition site <http://aejmc-mcs.confmaster.net/pages/login.php?Conf=AEJMC-MCS> by the 11:59 p.m. (Pacific) April 1 deadline. Each of the papers was reviewed by two judges (see No. 8 below for explanation). The division used, as it has in past years, the standard "Judging Sheet: AEJMC Division Research Papers" loaded on the Website for judges to be able to enter scores directly into the system. Judges were sent passwords and instructions for accessing their online papers. After all scores were entered into the system, the computer system calculated a standardized "z-score" for each paper based on the mean of the z-scores for each paper computed for each judge. The papers with the highest standardized score, with considerations of reviewers' rankings and recommendations, were selected for presentation at the convention. For this basic selection, we made no distinction between student and faculty papers or with the papers in the special competitions.

The next stage was to cluster the accepted papers into themes to create research panels. By May 15, authors were notified of acceptance or rejection by e-mail through the ConfMaster system with a customized e-mail that included the judges' scores and comments for their paper. By May 25, the accepted presenters were given information about their presentation time and date, and by June 12, they were also provided with their moderator and discussant names.


Based on standardized scores and reviewers' rankings and recommendations, the top three faculty papers and student papers were selected. Winners for the Moeller competition and the Social Divides competition also were selected.

Review sheet for the 2006 San Francisco paper competition was as follows:

**MC&S REVIEWER FORM – 2006 AEJMC CONVENTION**

	1	2	3	4	5
The purpose of the paper is stated clearly. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The paper is organized effectively. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The literature review is adequate. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The research method is described clearly. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The research method is appropriate and effective. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The evidence is good and related to the purpose of the paper. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The evidence is presented clearly. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The conclusions are related directly to the purpose of the paper. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The evidence supports the conclusions. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The subject represents a significant direction for communication research. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The questions addressed in this study are handled creatively. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The writing is good. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This paper is relevant to the focus of the division. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nominate for top paper?					

**Comments to author(s)**  
\*



**8. Total judges:**

84; 3 to 6 papers per judge – on average 5 papers per judge. With our record 133 submissions in 2005, the research co-chairs worked diligently throughout the year to recruit extra judges. Although we had only 67 in 2005, the co-chairs secured 84 judges for 2006. However, when we were hit with 203 submissions, a record for the division and we believe for AEJMC, the co-chairs had no choice but to give papers to only two judges for review. This was discussed with the COD chair before our decision to drop the third judge per paper. Because our acceptance rate was so low this year, *and* because all divisions will have electronic submission next year, we anticipate that the number of

submissions will drop significantly for 2007. However, research co-chairs will continue to actively build their roster of judges.

### **9. Other types of refereed competition**

- For the first time, the division awarded the Mass Communication & Society Research Award, designed to fund high-quality proposals with potential to produce innovative articles for publication in the division journal. This award of up to \$5,000 annually is to be funded with journal reserve surpluses generated by the journal's subscriptions. The division's membership voted to establish this award in August 2005. A committee comprised of current and past journal editors, current and past division heads and one at-large member was formed to set the criteria and issue the initial call and award. (See Winter newsletter for details). Those vying for the award had to submit a proposal, a budget, a timeline, and a vita. As of the May 1 deadline, the committee received 11 submissions. After a two-week review period, the committee ranked its top three proposals. The proposal with the highest average ranking was funded, with \$2,500 to be paid immediately and \$2,500 to be paid at the time the research is submitted to the journal.
- The division also conducted a special call for papers that addressed the role of U.S. mass media in social divides based on class, gender, race, and other factors. Number of submissions was 11; number of acceptances was 3. The special paper competition went through the normal paper competition process as other submissions for the annual AEJMC Convention. The top three submitted to the special competition were simply pulled out at the end of the judging process. Those not selected remained in the general paper competition.
- Another special competition for the 2006 annual competition was the Moeller competition, which recognizes top student papers written specifically for a class during the previous year. The papers must be nominated by the professor who taught the class. The top Moeller winner was selected by pulling the highest standardized score designated as a Moeller submission from the general pool after the z-scores were calculated.
- The division also conducted a general research competition for the Midwinter AEJMC Meeting at Bowling Green State. In that competition, MC&S attracted 31 research abstract submissions (abstracts or proposals were accepted). Of those, 24 were accepted – for an acceptance rate of 77%. While this rate is high compared with the annual convention, this conference is designed as an ideal forum for graduate students and new professors and high acceptance rates are encouraged. The procedure for this competition was as follows:
  - 1) Entrants sent in abstracts or proposals about their research,
  - 2) The abstracts were sent to three judges (10 judges total used + three who reviewed panel proposals), who rated them using the following form

### **2006 AEJMC Mid-Winter Conference**

Mass Communication & Society Division

REVIEWER FORM

Paper #:

Title:

Reviewer #:

SUMMARY EVALUATION: considering competence and contribution of the current abstract, please check your recommended disposition:

Definitely Reject	Probably Reject	Lean Toward Rejection	Lean Toward Acceptance	Probably Accept	Definitely Accept
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR(S)

- 3) Those with the highest total score were programmed.
- 4) Authors were notified via e-mail and mail of acceptance or rejection with the judges' average score and ranking among all submissions noted (rating sheets were not returned, but scores were).

**10. Convention activities related to research:**

In total, 80 papers were accepted by the MC&S division. These are programmed in the convention in the following sessions:

- o **Theoretical Foundations of Media Effects** (4 papers)
- o **Social Divides in U.S. Society: The Role of the Media** Co-sponsored with Minorities and Communication (Refereed research and invited panelists; 3 papers)
- o **Poster Session.** Co-sponsored with Newspaper. (41 papers).
- o **Framing in Crises and Media Content.** (High-density refereed research; 10 papers)
- o **Scholar-to-Scholar session** (7 papers)
- o **New Media: Choosing and Using** (5 papers)
- o **Making Us Sick? Making Us Well? Media and Health Issues** (5 papers)
- o **Evaluating the Media: The Effects** (5 papers)
- o

In addition, two other 2006 Convention panels will touch on research issues:

- o **Out of the Comfort Zone: Engaging Students in Diversity-Related Research.** Co-sponsored with MDIG. (Teaching panel, research focus as well)

- **Playing the Reviewing Game: Getting Published in Academic Journals.** Co-sponsored with Law. (PF&R panel, focusing on research issues)

### **11. Out-of-convention activities related to research**

This year MC&S out-of-convention activities included (as described in detail above):

- Paper competition for the Midwinter AEJMC Meeting in Bowling Green.
- MC&S Research Award
- Newsletter includes articles addressing topics relevant to MC&S research interests.

### **12. Research Goals and Activities**

This year, the division organized and awarded the first ever Mass Communication and Society Research Award, an annual \$5,000 cash award to help fund innovative research proposals submitted by division members. Every year, including this one, the division's research activities include publishing a high quality, peer-review journal, *Mass Communication & Society*. In addition, the division continued its participation in the Midwinter AEJMC Meeting in Bowling Green, Ohio. For the second year, the division received a record-breaking number (203) of research papers for the national AEJMC convention (the largest number of submissions ever received by a division, in our knowledge). Additionally, the division sponsored a special research competition for the AEJMC convention and sponsored several research sessions, including a high-density and a poster session to accommodate the record number of submissions.

Goals for next year should be to work with AEJMC to ensure a smooth transition to the system-wide electronic submission system for 2007, continuing to recruit judges to ensure three reviews per submission, and to work to clarify policies and procedures related to all research competitions so that information is recorded and can be followed easily by new officers each year. In addition, the research committee should continue to have two chairs AND a separate research chair for the Midwinter. The depth of work for the competitions requires several volunteers to keep things running smoothly.

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## **TEACHING**

### **13. In-convention activities related to teaching.**

The division is sponsoring or co-sponsoring three teaching conferences sessions in San Francisco.

- “Promising Professors Workshop”: Co-sponsored by the Graduate Education Interest Group, MC&S’ annual Promising Professor Competition winners and a Distinguished Educator present their teaching philosophies and methods, relaying how they engage, inspire and motivate students in their classes. These presentations all serve to highlight leadership in the field of teachings and inspire other faculty and graduate students to enhance their own classroom performances.
  - Moderator: Jennifer J. Fleming, California State University, Long Beach
  - Distinguished Educator: Joe Foote, Oklahoma

- First Place Winner: *Carol Schwalbe, Arizona State University*
  - Second Place Winner: *Erik Ugland, Marquette University*
  - Third Place Winner: *Susan Keith, Rutgers*
  - Graduate Student Division Winner: *Susan Robinson, Temple University*
- “It’s About More Than Scores: Teaching Courses About Sports, Communication and Society.” Co-sponsored with the Radio/TV Journalism Division, this panel will focus on how to help students understand the impact of sports media on culture and focus on the myriad of ethical and social issues involved in their future careers.
    - Moderator: John Curley, Penn State University
    - Panelists:
      - Susan Keith, Rutgers*
      - Bill Knowles, Montana*
      - Brad Schultz, Mississippi*
      - Marie Hardin, Penn State*
  - “Out of the Comfort Zone: Engaging Students in Diversity Related Research.” Co-sponsored with the Media and Disability Interest Group, this panel will provide teaching insights and tips on how we can best guide our students in conducting diversity-related research.
    - Moderator: Carol Liebler, Syracuse
    - Panelists:
      - Sharon Bramlett-Solomon, Arizona State*
      - Bradley Gorham, Syracuse*
      - Alexis Tan, Washington State*
      - Carol Liebler, Syracuse*
      - Gary R. Hicks, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville*

#### **14. Out-of-convention activities related to teaching**

- AEJMC Midwinter Conference, Bowling Green, OH: “Teaching Your First Mass Media Class” focused on how to prepare current graduate students and new faculty for teaching the introductory mass media course. This panel was designed to help graduate students and new faculty identify resources, organize readings, develop objectives and create a syllabus for their first Mass Media course. New and experienced faculty members teaching large and small classes provided advice and planning suggestions for those entering the fray.
  - Moderator: Marie Hardin, Pennsylvania State University
  - Panelists:
    - Chris Burnett, California State University, Long Beach*
    - Victoria Smith Ekstrand, Bowling Green State University*
    - Kalen Churcher, Pennsylvania State University*
- Pre-Conference workshop (Tuesday, August 1, 2006) on teaching the introductory mass communication course. The goal of this pre-convention workshop is to help prepare participants to teach this common course. From exercise and assignment



ideas to tips on tests, textbooks, technology and lecture topics, top teachers will share how they make their introductory mass communication classes memorable and manageable.

Moderator: Jennifer Jacobs Henderson, Trinity

Panelists:

*Dale Cressman*, Brigham Young University

*Jennifer J. Fleming*, California State University, Long Beach

*Ralph E. Hanson*, West Virginia University

*Roy L. Moore*, University of Kentucky

*Michael D. Murray*, University of Missouri-St. Louis

## **15. Teaching goals and activities**

- **Participate in the AEJMC Midwinter Conference by preparing and implementing a teaching panel.**

For the second consecutive year, the teaching standards committee programmed a teaching panel for the Midwinter Conference, held this year at Bowling Green State University. This panel was part of an overall theme of the year that focused on the various teaching methods that could be employed when teaching an introductory course in the field. The theme will carry over to the 2006 annual convention in San Francisco, when a pre-conference workshop on the topic will be offered.

- **Maintain the high level of quality submissions and volunteer participation in the Promising Professors Competition.**

The division's primary teaching activity, the Promising Professors Competition, is in its sixth year. The 2006 competition had 12 entrants, with four winners (who will receive their awards at the 2006 annual convention), and involved 12 volunteer judges. Many judges noted the high quality of teaching materials presented for the competition that recognizes the value of, the nurturing of, and the rewarding of teaching excellence in junior faculty members. Publicity for the competition included sending correspondence to every association department chair, director or dean to inform him/her of the competition, notice in the Mass Communication & Society Division newsletter and distribution of flyers at the AEJMC Midwinter Conference in Bowling Green, OH. Our continued partnering with GEIG for this competition and workshop helps engage a new generation of professors in the AEJMC.

- **Concentrate attention on teaching the introductory mass media course.**

This goal has been intertwined in all of the activities of the Teaching Standards Committee this year. The continued Promising Professors competition and Distinguished Educator Award highlight those who have been successful teachers early and throughout their careers respectively. Inevitably, those instructors identified as "promising" or "distinguished" have also been successful at teaching the introductory course and mention specific exercises related to this course in their application materials. The focus on teaching the introductory course was also integrated into a newsletter article on motivating students in the classroom. The two activities most directly related to this goal were the Midwinter teaching panel on "Teaching Your First Mass Media Class," and the upcoming pre-conference

workshop entitled, “Teaching the Mass Communication Class.” Each specifically addresses how faculty can be more successful teachers of the introductory course.

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## **PF&R**

### **16. In-convention activities related to PF&R**

The division is sponsoring four PF&R related conference sessions in San Francisco:

- “Re-defining writing: New models of journalistic practice.” Co-sponsored with Magazine, this panel will examine story reporting and writing techniques that move journalism beyond the basic print-centric, inverted-pyramid format. Panelists will be prepared to discuss how to integrate these journalism techniques into the progressive journalism curriculum and classroom.  
Moderator: Dane Claussen, Point Park  
Panelists:  
*David Abrahamson*, Northwestern  
*Brooke Kroeger*, New York  
*Carole Rich*, Alaska, Anchorage  
*Michele Weldon*, Northwestern
- “Social Divides in U.S. Society: The Role of the Media” Co-sponsored with Minorities and Communication (Refereed research and invited PF&R panelists). Although this is listed as a research competition panel, the session is designed as a hybrid, with practitioners giving tips on how educators can help future media professionals avoid the pitfalls that media fall into when covering race, class and other divisions in our society.  
Moderator: Jennifer Greer, University of Nevada, Reno  
Invited Panelists:  
*Dori J. Maynard*, Robert C. Maynard Institute for Journalism Education, Oakland  
*Patti Poblete*, San Francisco Chronicle
- “Playing the Reviewing Game: Getting Published in Academic Journals.” Co-sponsored with Law, this panel is the third in a series of panels co-sponsored by the division over the past three years designed to help new academics crack the code of getting published in the field’s journals. This year, we feature both editors and frequent contributors, who will share tips on navigating the sometimes baffling relationship between submitters and anonymous reviewers.  
Moderator: Janet A. Bridges, Sam Houston State University  
Panelists:  
*David Demers*, Washington State, frequent contributor  
*Sandra Utt*, Memphis, coeditor, *Newspaper Research Journal*  
*Martin E. Halstuk*, Pennsylvania State University, frequent contributor  
*W. Wat Hopkins*, Virginia Tech, editor, *Communication Law & Policy*  
*Dominic Lasorsa*, Texas, frequent contributor  
*Dietram Scheufele*, Wisconsin-Madison, frequent contributor

- “Media Literacy as Media Criticism: Do the Gloves Stay On?”  
Co-sponsored with the Scholastic Journalism Division, this panel will investigate different perspective about how media literacy in mass communication can be critical of media while still recognizing connection of media industries, especially as we train the next generation of media workers  
Moderator: Tim Bajkiewicz, South Florida  
Panelists:  
*Erica Weintraub Austin*, Washington State  
*Jennifer Fleming*, California State - Long Beach  
*Renee Hobbs*, Temple  
*Bob McCannon*, Action Coalition for Media Education.

### **17. Out-of-convention activities related to PF&R**

- One session at the AEJMC Midwinter in Bowling Green: “Communication Dynamics Inherent in Social and Public Policy Concerns in the Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina” This session featured the ongoing research of scholars examining the public-policy rhetoric after Hurricane Katrina, raising issues about the relationship between the media, community and policy makers and the impact of race- and class-relation dynamics.  
Moderator: Truman R. Keys, Howard University  
*Panelists:*  
*Russell Robinson*, Howard University  
*Jerry Crawford*, Howard University  
*Curtis D. Carey*, Howard University  
*Truman R. Keys*, Howard University
- Off site convention activity, August 2: “Laughing at Ourselves: Comics and American culture.” Co-sponsored with Visual Communication Division. This visit to Cartoon Museum of San Francisco is designed to look at the biting commentary on U.S. society offered by all types of mass comics – from the funny pages to the editorial pages. The museum’s Website states that its goal is to “preserve, document, and exhibition this unique and accessible art form...the museum has taken cartoon art and used it to communicate cultural diversity in the community and the importance of self expression.”

### **18. PR&R Goals and Activities**

The division sought to shed light on PR&R issues through several newsletter articles on PF&R topics, including three written by the PF&R chair and three headnotes and one article written by the division head. The focus of the Winter newsletter was on PF&R, with two depth articles and a headnote focused on these issues. The centerpiece article was: "Media literacy and PF&R: Tools for the trip." The headnote and the secondary article focused on “Mixing the mommy track and the tenure track.” Other articles included an article in the spring on Katie Couric and a fall article on "What is this thing called PF&R?" Two headnotes also focused on the social divides theme.

MC&S' primary PF&R goals and activities this year were to help shed light on the role that U.S. media play in bridging and sometimes widening social divides. This topic was born out of the charges of racism and classism in the coverage of Hurricane Katrina and continued to be a focus throughout the year in several stories, including the charges against the Duke Lacrosse team in the spring. The division sponsored a special research competition, "Social Divides and the Mass Media," selecting three papers for presentation on a special panel in San Francisco co-sponsored by the Minorities and Communication Division. One of the invited panelists, Dori Maynard, has visited newsrooms around the country presenting training on how to recognize and overcome "faultlines" of race, class, age, location, and gender in covering news stories. Pati Poblete was once demographics editor of the Chronicle and dealt with these issues in covering diverse communities.

**General Information:**

**19. Please attach copies of the newsletters** sent by your group this year, and any other material you wish us to note.

All three MC&S division newsletters this year are attached to this report.

Beginning with the Fall 2005 issue, the division newsletter was redesigned using Adobe InDesign software. This format allows a PDF to be created for distribution on the division Website. In an effort to standardize the appearance of the publication and aid in succession between newsletter editors, a template using style sheets and libraries was created. Aesthetic improvements included a logo-look nameplate, additional white space and features that allow readers to effectively scan the material, such as deckheads, call-out boxes, a calendar and index. In addition to regular division news, each newsletter featured articles highlighting a particular area of the division's mission: teaching in the fall, professional freedom and responsibility in the winter, and 2006 annual convention information in the spring issue.