

spig news

Newsletter of AEJMC's Small Programs Interest Group

Spring 2015

'Teacher of the Year' entry deadline March 15

Members of the AEJMC Small Programs Interest Group are invited to apply for the Ginger Rudeseal Carter Miller Teacher of the Year Competition 2015, honoring

a member who demonstrates excellence in teaching and advising.

Those interested can be nominated or can apply. Only members of SPIG are eligible, but the current SPIG

chair, vice chair and past winners are not eligible. The deadline is March 15.

Send electronic submissions only in three easy steps:

See **TEACHER** page 2

Students find trends, topics riding the bus

New Haven project produces 30 stories

By Jodie Mozdzer Gil

ALONG with the traditional syllabus and course policies, I handed my Multimedia Journalism students a bus schedule and map the first day of class in Fall 2014.

It was the beginning of an experiment collaborating with the New Haven Independent, a decade-old non-profit news site run by news veteran Paul Bass.

The Southern Connecticut State University journalism students would ride the CT Transit buses in and around New Haven to get a sense of how the city's



SCSU Journalism/Carol Castro

SCSU journalism student Xavier Lassiter, right, interviews U.S. Sen. Chris Murphy on a Hartford bus as part of the CT Bus Diaries series.

public transportation is working – and how it's failing.

The students scoffed at the idea. One dropped the class. They later admitted that the thought of the project seemed impossible. I also had my doubts that we could pull it off.

Yet, over the course of the next 18 weeks, the students interviewed riders, transit officials,

public transportation experts and even a U.S. senator. They pored through federal transportation data. They searched social media for mentions of the bus. They wrote trend stories, and small slice of life stories. They sparked conversation around the city, and among officials.

In all, more than 30 articles appeared in the

See **DIARIES**, page 4

HEAD NOTES

Cultivating conviction and civility

By Wally Metts

Opportunities for our students to produce, perform and publish their work are exploding. This means good storytelling with high aesthetic and technical standards is at a premium, even in local markets. But while technical expertise is easily obtained, good judgment is not. Somehow we need to have more conversations with our students about which story gets told in the first place.

Part of making these judgments is context. Our students need to know what they are talking about but also why it matters. This means we should probably

See **NOTES**, page 8

TEACHER, from page 1

1. Supply one letter of recommendation from a former student with the names, email addresses and phone numbers of two other possible former student references.
2. Supply ONE letter of recommendation from a colleague or former colleague, with the names, email addresses and phone numbers of two other possible references.
3. Supply evidence of teaching and advising excellence. You MUST include:
 - A 500-word statement of your teaching philosophy;
 - Two course syllabi;
 - Two examples of an assignment, project, test, exercise, etc.;
 - Two formal teaching evaluations by students as professionally administered by applicant's institution under conditions of student anonymity, and
 - A Curriculum Vitae (no more than eight pages).

These nomination packets must be received by the SPIG Teaching Co-Chair by March 15, 2015. Email materials to:

Liz Atwood (atwood@hood.edu), English Department, Hood College, Frederick, MD 21701.

For more information, you may call Professor Atwood at 410-925-6798 (cell) or 301-696-3231 (office).

These are the selection procedures:

By March 20, the nominees will be notified that necessary materials have been received. Judges will rank the applicants, forwarding their rankings by April 30 to Teaching Co-Chair Liz Atwood (atwood@hood.edu), who will tabulate the results.

The winner will be announced at the SPIG business meeting at the annual AEJMC convention, where he or she will receive a plaque and \$100. The winner may then serve as chair or co-chair of SPIG's teaching committee for the coming year.

The teaching co-chair also will notify the winner's dean and/or chair, the winner's school and local newspapers, and AEJMC central office, requesting that an announcement appear in the next newsletter.



Stonehill/Maureen Boyle

Students revisit typewriter era

We didn't quite go as far as Florida Atlantic University and try to put out a newspaper the old fashioned way but I did haul in some hefty old typewriters into my Development of American News Media class so students could experience the joy (or horror) of using manual typewriters – and carbon paper. They loved the experience and got a hoot at the “ding” the typewriters made. They now all appreciate word processing.

Here is a link to some of the photos:

<http://www.stonehill.edu/news-media/throwback/details/tbt-typewriter-throwback/>

Contributed by Maureen Boyle, Journalism program director, Stonehill College, Easton, Mass. Professor Boyle may be contacted at mboyle@stonehill.edu.

Recording on a smartphone

Q. For those of you who are working with mobile reporting: Do you have a favorite voice recording app for iOS and for Android? (Free apps would be best.) I have RodeRecLS in mind for iPhones but am open to all suggestions.

Donna Harrington-Lueker, Salve Regina

A. Wavepad works well on both Apple and Android, and is free. <http://www.nch.com.au/wavepad/pocket.html>

Cathy Strong, Wellington campus, Massey, New Zealand

A. Whatever you do, the ability to plug in a remote mic makes the difference between night and day. I use the iRig mic for my iPhone, \$50, and the accompanying app.

John B. Zibluk, Southeast Missouri State

A. I demonstrate the difference with and without mic and they never go mic-less again. iRig for Apple products, or a number of inexpensive attachments that allow most mics to work with a smartphone. **Cathy Strong,**

Cindy Simoneau focuses on teen readers

What is your current primary job title and employer?

Associate professor of journalism and chair of the Journalism Department, Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, Conn. I teach classes in intermediate and advanced reporting, the role of news media in America, literary journalism, magazine writing, copy editing, First Amendment and freshman inquiring

Tell me an interesting fact about you.

As an undergrad I was consumed by my desire to practice journalism, I was the managing editor of my college daily newspaper (and had formerly served as a copy editor and reporter), and I covered two communities for the nearby community daily newspaper. During the summers I worked in the university's public relations department, learning how the other side used their writing and editing skills.

What was your first job?

As a teenager, I often worked as a babysitter, but my first official jobs were as a cashier in a local supermarket and working in production jobs at a family costume jewelry business. In Rhode Island costume jewelry was big business. I hated being the granddaughter, niece and cousin of the bosses.

Tell me about your education.

Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from the University of Rhode Island and Master of Science in political science (public policy), Southern CT State University

What is your current research focus?

My research focus has been on young teen readers. For 16 years I have led the only regional high school journalism project in the state. Every month students from various public, private and parochial schools meet to plan

SPIG PROFILE



SIMONEAU

stories and photos of interest to them.

What do you like about your job and your workplace?

I love working with students. It is wonderful to see them transform from thinking they want to be a journalist to knowing they want this career. When they transition to the workplace and return to campus to meet with classes or for alumni events and I hear them talking about the relevance all their classwork has to the workplace is validation we're offering what is needed to succeed. Southern is a state institution facing the usual government budget cutbacks, but we have a supportive dean of Arts & Sciences and provost who honor our work with students.

Tell me something about your personal life.

I am married. My husband is an employee benefits consultant who I met in college when he was business

manager of our college newspaper. We are the parents of twin sons. One son has his BS and MBA in Information Systems from Fairfield University and works for Aon Hewitt. Our other son is a lawyer who received his BA from Pepperdine University and his JD from Wake Forest University.

What other significant achievements have you had?

Former president, and former treasurer of Connecticut chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. Longest serving SPJ board member at 30 plus years. Four-time winner of chapter's president's award for service. Woman of Distinction Award from Fairfield County Girl Scout Council. Bishop's Award for outstanding service to the Diocese of Bridgeport, Conn. Numerous writing and reporting awards.

What are your personal or professional goals now?

Expand my department's offerings for students and work with other departments on campus to see the importance of journalistic writing and editing for their students in other career fields.

What leadership roles have you had in the AEJMC and the Small Programs Interest Group?

Secretary and membership chair

What goal do you have for SPIG?

Reaching out to as many faculty at small programs as possible. SPIG is an important asset to AEJMC and offers helpful hands-on mentoring roles for faculty.

If you had to describe yourself, what words would you use?

I am a dynamic, outgoing professional who enjoys telling others' stories, and helping students find their career path in journalism. I am a news junkie.

DIARIES, from page 1

series called The CT Bus Diaries.

As I move forward with a new semester, and a new collaboration with the New Haven Independent, I have spent time reflecting on the first go-around in hopes that I can continue to improve the experience for the students.

Some takeaways:

Work with an open-minded editor. When I asked Bass if he'd be willing to collaborate with some students, he was immediately on board, and came up with the idea of writing about public transportation. I expressed my concerns: I didn't know if the students would deliver enough quality stories to be published in the series. Bass told me not to worry, he'd be happy to work with us, and delivered on that promise. Bass understands the nature of serial storytelling, and accepted short stories that showed a moment in time on a bus. His vision for the bigger project helped move it along, and helped the students feel empowered to get creative with some of their stories.

Get ready to work hard. You already work hard. Adding a project like this means taking on the role of editor on top of teacher. I was the gatekeeper of the drafts, and spent hours of one-on-one time with the student reporters to get their stories in shape and make sure they were publishable. Several stories didn't make it past the first edit. Many didn't get sent to the New Haven Independent even after two rounds of editing. Around 60 articles were handed in. Only 30 made the cut.

Be flexible. Students are busy, especially at a school like Southern

where many are working one or two jobs to help pay for tuition. So asking them to be working reporters can be a burden on their schedules. I didn't want to have them resent the project, so I worked in lots of flexibility. There were 10 weekly deadlines, with two make-up opportunities. If a student was too busy to ride the bus one week, they could skip and use the make-up week to get credit later. I also gave out "coupons" for in-class work. Any time we practiced new skills in class, I gave written feedback with a coupon grade. Students could trade those grades, like coupons, to replace a missed bus story, or to improve a bad grade on a bus post.

Keep some consistency. I like the idea of a semester-long

"You already work hard. Adding a project like this means taking on the role of editor on top of teacher."

project that allows students to keep consistency while learning various new skills and tools. As I introduced data, or video, or social media elements to the assignments, the students already had a good idea of the beat and were able to give more focus to the new skill. This addressed a concern I've had in previous multimedia classes, that students are often overwhelmed by incorporating new elements to their existing reporting.

Pair students up – whether they realize it or not. The most successful stories in The CT Bus Diaries happened almost by accident, when students interviewed people about the same topics. For example, several

students looked at data related to maintenance costs. Their reporting was combined into one story. Other combo stories included one on students at Yale, Southern and other New Haven schools depending on the bus for their commutes, and a "Humans of New York" type photo essay.

Give direct feedback. One of my frustrations as an instructor is when I give lots of feedback on an article draft, then see none of the suggestions incorporated in a second draft. The more I talk to students, I get a sense that the written comments are hard to interpret and can be confusing at times. So I was happy to be able to meet one-on-one with the students working on the bus project and go through a line edit of their story drafts with them in the room. I always found these kinds of meetings helpful as a young reporter or intern. And I saw more improvement on future drafts than I have with written comments. The meetings also gave me a

chance to reinforce some course topics in person, and get to know the students much better.

Reflect and revise. My new crop of Multimedia Journalism students are now working on a second round of collaboration with the New Haven Independent – this time profiling small businesses in the New Haven area. I've made several changes based on the first round of experiment, but fully expect to continue reflecting on and then revising the course.

To view the CT Bus Diaries, visit <http://tinyurl.com/ov92dkj>.

Jodie Mozdzer Gil is an assistant professor of journalism at Southern Connecticut State University.

August program begins with digital storytelling

Other panels: Tips for teaching online, advising student media

MASS communication educators constantly grapple with industry changes and the same old questions of how best to impart them to their students.

That dilemma is reflected in the program offered this year by the Small Programs Interest Group at AEJMC's Aug. 5-9 meeting in San Francisco. Three panels will address the impact of the digital age on higher education, while others will focus on traditional concerns such as ethics, advising student media, how to optimize service learning opportunities, and the best methods for improving religion reporting.

The panels, times, and topics are set, but the panelists could change due to unforeseen circumstances or simply because the program is still being developed. This is the best programming information we have to date:

WEDNESDAY, Aug. 5 (Pre-conference)

1-2:30 p.m. "More Than a Good Story – Methods for Teaching Digital Storytelling." Submitted by: Dawn Francis, Cabrini College.

A good story grabs attention. A good multimedia story does more than that. It uses a cohesive mix of multiple media to bring audiences into the setting, journey with the story characters, and feel a range of emotions. Can students learn how to produce these compelling stories in a semester's timeframe? This session will examine methods for effectively instructing hands-on courses on digital storytelling. How do we prepare students to be digital storytellers? How do we blend foundational principles of good storytelling with instruction on using new technologies to capture and tell them? What is the process for moving students from idea to digital story?

Panelists:

Dawn Francis, Cabrini College
Kathleen Webber, The College of New Jersey
Jill Van Wyke, Drake University
Cathy Yungmann, Cabrini College
Jack Zibluk, Southeast Missouri State University

3-4:30 p.m. "Tips for Putting Your Courses -- and Programs -- Online," Submitted by: Wally Metts, Spring Arbor University.

In an increasingly competitive market, small programs are getting pressure from administrators to cut costs AND launch new programs. This means online offerings are getting a second and third look. Why would you want to put courses online? Why wouldn't you? This panel is a primer for going online.

Panelists:

Wally Metts, Spring Arbor University (Moderator)
Lisa DeFaria, Significant Systems
Michael Clifford, Entrepreneur
Brian Newberry, California State University (San Bernardino)

THURSDAY, Aug. 6 (Conference)

8:15-9:45 a.m. "Advising Student Media: The Rewards and the Pitfalls." Submitted by: James Simon, Fairfield. Co-Sponsor: CCJA.

What are the most frequent problems that advisers face? What resources are out there to help? What do you know now, as an adviser, that you wish you had known when you started? What should the role of adviser be? How to get publications out of advising. How to get tenure while irritating the administration. In an age of convergence, why are you advising just a newspaper ... or TV station ... or radio station or yearbook. The panel will cover these issues and more.

Panelists:

James Simon, Fairfield (Moderator)
Toni Albertson, Mt. San Antonio College
Bruce Depyssler, North Carolina Central University
Christina M. Jackson, University of Nebraska at Kearney
Michael O'Donnell, University of St. Thomas

10-11:30 a.m. "Going Pro: Teaching Students to Use Social Media as Professional Communicators."

See **PROGRAM** page 6

PROGRAM, from page 1

Submitted by: Lisa Weidman, Linfield College. Co-Sponsor: MAGD

As social media play an ever-increasing role in the fields of journalism, public relations and advertising, mass communication faculty must offer curricula to teach our students how to use these newer media channels as professionals. This session will offer ideas, tips and “lessons learned” from faculty who have developed and taught courses or units on how to transform students from casual users of social media into professional communicators on these sites.

Panelists:

Lisa Weidman, Linfield College (Moderator)
Yumi Wilson, San Francisco State University
Carol Zuegner, Creighton University
Darren Sweeney, Central Conn. State University
Kathy Keltner-Previs, Eastern Kentucky University

FRIDAY, Aug. 7 (Conference)

11:45 a.m.-1:15 p.m. “Forget Independence – Collaboration Is the New Buzzword.” Submitted by: Toni Albertson, Mt. San Antonio College. Co-Sponsor: CCJA.

Student media newsrooms are structured in a way that student reporters are expected to turn in their work by deadline, edit, and move on. But what happens when students are encouraged to collaborate? This panel will discuss a new way of advising student media staffs, where collaboration, analytics and competition are encouraged. The results might surprise you.

Panelists:

Robert Mercer, Cypress College
Sally Renaud, Eastern Illinois
Mary Spillman, Ball State

1:30-3 p.m. SPIG Luncheon (Location TBA)

Presentation of the Ginger Rudeseal Carter Miller 2015 Teacher of the Year

5-6:30 p.m. “Hot Topics” on Ethics. Submitted by: John Jenks. Co-Sponsor: ETHC.

The focus of this hot topics panel will be determined closer to the conference in order to have the most relevant ethics discussion based on current events.

Panelists are being invited based on the topic selected.

8:30-10 p.m. SPIG Members’ Business Meeting

SATURDAY, Aug. 8 (Conference)

12:15-1:30 p.m. Scholar-to-Scholar – SPIG refereed paper presentations

1:45- 3:15 p.m. “High Impact Practices & Experiential Learning: Maximizing Students’ Education.” Submitted by: Carolyn Mae Kim, Biola University. Co-Sponsor: CCSD.

This panel will address practical ways that faculty can purposefully use experiential learning to broaden students’ learning with high impact practices. Practically identifying ways to integrate these strategies into curriculum, the panel will present specific assignments, projects and exercises that have proven track records of success.

Panelists:

Michael Longinow, Biola (Moderator)
Ed Madison, University of Oregon
Greg Adamo, Morgan State
Michael Ray Smith, Palm Beach Atlantic University
Carolyn Mae Kim, Biola University

SUNDAY, Aug. 9 (Conference)

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. “Putting Religion into the Nut Graph: Ideas on Transforming Religion News into Vital News in the Small Journalism Program.” Submitted by: Michael Ray Smith, Palm Beach Atlantic. Co-Sponsored by: RMIG.

Hard news often includes a religion element but often this angle isn’t explored well and part of the fault isn’t in the stars but in the sage on the stage who does a poor job of teaching strategies for including this essential element as part of the news narrative.

Panelists:

Michael Ray Smith, Palm Beach Atlantic (Moderator)
Julia C. Duin, University of Alaska Fairbanks
Michael A. Longinow, Biola
Wally Metts, Spring Arbor University
J. Duane Meeks, Palm Beach Atlantic

Honors, books and other news for SPIG teachers, students

Several members of SPIG have achieved milestones in the past few months. Here are a few of them. We welcome submissions for the next newsletter, where we hope to continue running this column.

Jim Sernoe, chair of the Mass Communication Department at Midwestern State University, reports that four students in his documentary production course have won the Barbara Jordan Media Award. “Never Defeated,” a documentary about Corey Wilson, a college football player who was paralyzed from the waist down in a car accident, was cited as the best College Student Production.

Students Alyssa Biere, Mary Cuba, Samantha Forester and J.C. Rickman, along with Wilson, will accept the award at a banquet in Austin scheduled for April 18. The awards are sponsored by the Texas Governor’s Committee on People with Disabilities and draw entries from across the state.

The late Barbara Jordan was the first African-American elected to the Texas Senate and the first African-American woman from the South elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. She also had multiple sclerosis, but refused to let it control her life.

Sernoe said the award reflects several strengths of the department and university. “I keep telling our students that we can compete with anyone in the state, even if we’re not as well-known as UT or A&M,” he said. “‘Smaller’ does not mean ‘worse,’ and in fact, it is often an asset. I couldn’t be more thrilled for the students.”

Lisa A. Phillips’ new book, “Unrequited: Women and Romantic Obsession,” has been published by HarperCollins. The book explores the force of unrequited

MEMBER MILESTONES

love in women’s lives. Interweaving her own story with frank interviews and in-depth research in science,



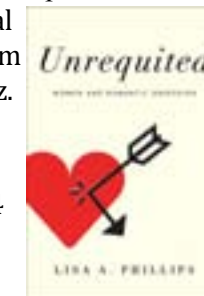
PHILLIPS

psychology, cultural history and literature, Phillips describes how romantic obsession takes root, grows and strongly influences our thought and behaviors.

The Washington Post called the book “an ingenious hybrid of memoir, case study, scientific inquiry and intellectual history not only of unrequited love but of Love, full stop, with a capital L.” Phillips is an assistant professor of Digital Media & Journalism at SUNY New Paltz.

Michael Ray Smith, SPIG Head for the 2013-2014 academic year, recently moved to South Florida

to help with the multiplatform journalism at Palm Beach Atlantic University in the School of Communication and Media. Smith advises *The Beacon* student newspaper and readmybeacon.com web site and teaches classes in interactive media, ethics and more. Among the traditions at PBA is that full professors wear a medal for ceremonies. Smith received his from Dean J. Duane Meeks. Smith’s other news is that his seventh book, “Seven Days to a Byline,” is scheduled



for release by Lighthouse Publishing of the Carolinas Aug. 3. The book features contributions by some SPIG members.

Michael Longinow was honored Feb. 28 in Universal City, Calif., as Journalism Educator of the Year (university division) by the California Journalism Educators Coalition. Cal-JEC president Rich Cameron announced the award just prior to the annual awards ceremony of the California College Media Association. Cameron chairs the department of Mass Communication at Cerritos College and is an active leader among Journalism educators and media advisers in community colleges across California and nationwide.

Cal-JEC is a nine-member coalition of journalism education groups and journalism trade associations. The award recognizes excellence in journalism teaching and research, media advising, and involvement with the wider community statewide and nationally.

John McClelland, associate professor emeritus at Roosevelt University, Chicago, received a rare “Life Member” award from the Association of Opinion Journalists, formerly National Conference of Editorial Writers. It was awarded for years of editing its journal, *Masthead*, and months of intense volunteer effort rebuilding its website during management turmoil in 2014. <http://opinionjournalists.org>

Carrie Buchanan has achieved tenure at John Carroll University, where she is an assistant professor in the Tim Russert Department of Communication and Theatre Arts.



BUCHANAN

NOTES, from page 1

broaden our programs rather than narrow them. It may be time to return to required minors and add more general education courses. And of course students also need to have read the classics in our field and be able to ground the stories they tell in the best traditions and values of our discipline.

Then we need to help them think about these things; often we don't know how. We ourselves must think about, write about and talk about these ancient ideas. The trick is to relate them more broadly to contemporary issues, technologies and opportunities — not just the most recent pop-culture artifact. For example, we have taught

interpersonal and small group communication for decades, but we still know very little about how these things work in the virtual communities and distributed work places where our students live. We should learn this and teach this.

Frankly, the speed and scope of communication heightens the need for meaning and authenticity. In "The Company of Strangers." Parker Palmer explores this theme, citing Tocqueville's "habits of the heart" as a way to restore our capacity for community. These habits, he says, include the kind of reflection that enables discrimination. As it turns out, everyone is not a winner, and not all ideas are important. Consequently, Palmer says students need humility and

chutzpah, the ability to listen carefully with respect and to speak clearly with conviction.

We often stress listening and speaking, but this is not enough. It is respect and conviction students lack. Even a cursory glance at comments on news articles or YouTube videos reveals these qualities no longer inform our civic discourse. Perhaps that's why the apostle Paul says we are "to speak the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15).

It may not be easy, but we should even do this on Twitter.

Wallis C. Metts Jr., Ph.D., is director of graduate studies in communication at Spring Harbor University, Spring Harbor, Mich. His email address is wally.metts@arbor.edu.

Which comes first? Research or technology?

Q. For a variety of reasons--having to master the technology and having to devote the time to editing packages--I'm finding that basic reporting is getting a bit of a short-shrift in my multimedia storytelling class.

Have any of you done multimedia projects or packages where students have had to do a fairly significant amount of research (for a 200-level class) before heading out to shoot and interview? I guess I'm thinking of things like having a topic or theme that they explore--and then have specific stories develop out of that? Perhaps even bringing in a guest speaker as part of the ramp-up to the package itself?

Newport can be a sleepy place in the off-season, but I'd love for the project to take them out into the community as well. There are 16 in the class--and that'll mean having to find 16 different stories that pertain to the theme or topic we explore. Is

SPIG LIST Q&A

that reasonable to think?

Donna Harrington-Lueker, Salve Regina University

harringd@salve.edu

We now have a six-credit co-requisite that includes Newswriting and Reporting I and an Intro to Multimedia course. The faculty share some assignments. This is just the second semester. We will assess the final projects at the end of the semester. I do not teach either of the courses, but it will be interesting to see how the writing and reporting fare alongside the requirement for photo/video.

Vivian Martin, Central Connecticut State

MartinV@mail.ccsu.edu

We've done class projects on

a specific theme. Students write stories and do videos to match the stories. The projects have a strong focus on writing. The technology we use is simple iMovie. I don't want them to be overwhelmed with the editing ad I've found iMovie the solution for these projects. When the technology gets overwhelming, I back off a bit to keep the focus on good writing and reporting.

Maureen Boyle, Stonehill College, Easton, Mass.

mboyle@stonehill.edu

This thread endorses the need for the panel organized by Dr. Dawn Francis during the AEJMC pre-conference day Wednesday, August 5. It's in San Francisco this year - a dreamy mirage for those of us in the frigid eastern U.S.

Kathy Yungmann, Cabrini College, Radnor, Pa.

cathy.yungmann@cabrini.edu

'Academia.edu' draws global response to research

By Carrie Buchanan

The emails arrive daily, sometimes more than one. Someone from South Africa, India, Singapore, Finland, the United States or some other country has just searched for me on Google or Bing, they say, and found one of my papers on Academia.edu.

It's almost always the same paper: my January 2015 publication, "Revisiting the UNESCO debate on a New World Information and Communication Order: Has the NWICO been achieved by other means?" It was published online six months before it appeared in print. That's when the daily emails started.

Most thrilling to me: In the past 30 days, at the time of writing, people from 17 different countries have visited my page. People from 32 additional countries have visited since I joined Academia.edu a few years ago.

Upon entering academia after a career spanning 25 years in journalism, then moving from Canada to the U.S., I naturally expected to lose my audience — or any large audience. A handful of people would read my articles, I told myself and my journalist friends. I would no longer be a quasi-public figure.

This is really different from what I expected, and it's thrilling. I know I'm not alone in this, either. How many of you are experiencing similar things since the arrival of Internet analytics?

I do realize that many of my former colleagues, journalists as well as academics, are getting

RESEARCH

exposure and recognition they never would have anticipated before the Internet. This trend has really picked up since I left my newspaper job in 2000. Today, journalists actually know where their readers come from and which articles they prefer.

A few details, for those who haven't experienced Academia.edu as yet: I was not allowed to post the actual journal article on

"This is really different from what I expected, and it's thrilling. I know I'm not alone in this, either. How many of you are experiencing similar things since the arrival of Internet analytics?"

my Academia.edu site, which is open to the public, but the journal's rules did say I could post the draft submitted for peer review. In the case of the NWICO article — but not most others I've had published — there was very little difference after the peer reviews because I'd submitted it to a conference beforehand and made significant revisions already.

Since the NWICO paper, as I call it for short, was published online in June 2014 by Telematics & Informatics, the copy I posted has attracted hits from all over the world to my Academia.edu site. That paper alone has had 179 views in eight months. I guess the journal

has analytics too, and I should get them! This does not include the people who read it in the journal or download it from an academic database. It is, in my mind, an indicator of interest.

Another of my articles has had 75 hits and, because it was based on my dissertation, it attracted readers to that prodigious tome, which I naturally assumed would be read by about a dozen people. The dissertation is up to 114 views, as of this writing. I realize that these are just "views" and not people sitting down to read the entire thing. But it's more attention than I ever expected it to get.

Never would I have anticipated that people from such far-flung places would read my articles. Or that I would become internationally known — not just in the English-speaking world, but far beyond that — even if it's only to a few scholars who care deeply about the UNESCO battles from the 1980s.

I will be posting this article on my blog, "[Is Journalism Over?](http://IsJournalismOver.com)" on WordPress, in the hope that some of you will use the comments section there to share your own stories about publications that achieved the unexpected. As former journalists, I think we all assumed we were retreating to the ivory tower. What a surprise to find our readers are more far-flung and diverse than ever!

Carrie Buchanan, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of communication at John Carroll University in Cleveland and co-editor of SPIG News.

How we do peer review for oral presentations

Notes from the SPIG discussion list

Q: I have a New Year's question about peer review for oral presentations. Do you solicit student feedback on each speaker, or just evaluate them yourself? If students comment on their peers, is it anonymous? I've given out slips of paper with a rating system, but that's a lot of paperwork.

Mary Alice Basconi, East Tennessee State

I evaluate them myself. I found it puts the students in an awkward position evaluating fellow students (who are often their friends).

Maureen Boyle, Stonehill

I sometimes solicit student feedback on student presentations. Sometimes it is anonymous and sometimes it isn't. I solicit anonymous feedback in classes where students are at computer workstations. This allows me to have them provide feedback right after a presentation through a web link to a form (I've used SurveyMonkey for this, but Google Forms could work too).

At the next class session, I'll provide a printout of the anonymous feedback to the presenters (along with my feedback). I solicit non-anonymous feedback via paper forms that students complete immediately following a presentation for classes that do not have student workstations. Usually I do this in classes that have teams. Students will provide feedback for their teammates' presentations, not every single presentation. I will give presenters their peers' feedback at the next class session (again, along with my feedback).

In both cases, I first briefly discuss with them what type of feedback they prefer to get/they find the most helpful. While it might be nice to hear, "I really liked that," it is more helpful to hear, "I really liked that and here is why ..." We talk about how it is also quite helpful — a gift really — for someone to provide constructive feedback

SPIG LIST Q&A

given with the intent to help a person improve/perform better the next time around. I ask them to think about the type of feedback they'd like to get when they are giving feedback to their classmates.

I review peer feedback before giving it to the presenter, just to be sure there isn't anything inappropriate. I think sometimes students pay more attention to their peers' feedback than to mine (other than the actual grade).)

Mitzi Lewis, Midwestern State

Most of my classes don't include oral presentations, but in writing classes I regularly have students' work critiqued and involve fellow students in the process. I explain that it's an important professional skill to learn how to critique others' work and how to deal with having work critiqued by others.

Cheryl Mann Bacon, Abilene Christian

Depending on the class, I handle it both ways. But when we conduct peer reviews, here's how I handle it: Each student in the class receives a packet with the name of each speaker at the top of the evaluation form. The evaluating student puts his/her name on the attached Post-it note so I know who did the evaluating. During the presentations they follow the check-off boxes for ratings. At the bottom of the sheet I have space for a sentence or two of summary comment. (I give time between presentations and at the end of all for them to complete the sheets). At the end of the class presentations I collect all the packets. Later, I read through them, separate each evaluator's packet and compile new packets with my evaluation sheet and grades followed by their classmates' sheets and staple the packet together.

It's interesting how much clear agreement students see from their

peers about the outcome. This ensures the comments are anonymous to the speaker. Each speaker must also submit a self-evaluation form. Also, I give grades for the evaluation packets and guidance that every speaker is not good, requiring each evaluator to give comments that specifically shows points of improvement or success. Surprisingly, it does not take as long as it may seem to compile the critique packets (although student worker help for this task is always welcome).

I have also followed the method of having classmates pass the evaluation forms to the speaker after the presentation, without my review, but I found that did not yield the same in-depth results as giving a small grade for the work along with the knowledge I would be reviewing the results.

Cindy Simoneau, So. Connecticut

My routine made peer rating-feedback anonymous to the speaker but not to me. Rating something for participation credit increases attention and possibly learning. Yes, peer evals are a lot of paper, but so are frequent writing tasks and such. Ripping slips from worksheets, sorting, tallying, stapling, additional commenting and recording took less than two hours for a class of 28.

In a lab now, one might use software. My slips asked for presenter's name and topic, best and worst things, something the rater learned, one bit of advice and a numerical score. For formal pitches with audio or visual aids, there might be a line for that. On a five-step scale, I asked them to give fewer than 1/4 of the scores at the top. Peer scores were about 1 percent of course total.

Comments were almost always relevant and civil, sometimes pointed. It worked. If I were back in the saddle, I would solicit student feedback on my role and on the process.

John McClelland, Roosevelt

Blogging Ferguson: Students study attributes of messages

By **Doug Mendenhall**

At Abilene Christian University last fall, nearly 50 students taking the introductory course in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication joined me in researching the media implications of tumultuous events in Ferguson, Missouri, which were still unraveling in late August.

This class project began on the first day of class and continued throughout the semester as I explained each step of the process of academic research and let them get their hands dirty.

That first day, after handing out a syllabus and taking care of the other mundane chores, I challenged them to speak up with suggestions for a specific media event, outlet or product that might be likely to produce uncivil language that we could easily break down and compare along some dividing line. They offered everything from celebrity "gotcha" sites to feminist writings on religion. The next day, we voted on which topic to pursue.

The winner by a nose was a study of blog posts written in the aftermath of Ferguson, broken down by the race of the authors. I explained how we could examine these messages by using the Diction 7.0 software with which I'd become familiar during my recently completed dissertation at Texas Tech University. This software counts words to measure dozens of elements that make up the specific tone of any message, so if blacks and whites wrote differently about Ferguson, we should be able to tease out those differences.

First, though, we had a lot of work to do.

Students next were assigned to find one solid article that could contribute to a literature review for our study. I offered directions for databases and possible search terms, explained the difference between academic and popular sources and turned them loose to write up one-page briefs on the dozens of articles they uncovered related to our topic. Certainly I had to fill in the gaps later, but their initial research gave us a number of usable sources.

“I'm declaring the project a success because of the degree of interest in academic research and analysis that it aroused in my students ...”

Then it was time to collect data. Teams of three (to promote honesty, competence and team spirit) were assigned to each of the top 15 political blog sites in the United States and given specific instructions for gathering every post related to Ferguson in the two weeks following the shooting of Michael Brown. They also probed for mug shots, self-references biographies, related sites and other sources to determine the race of each writer – a tough criterion that forced students to dump many promising posts because of indeterminate race. Still, every team completed its task on time and with an acceptable degree of professionalism.

While they were still collecting, I used 10 of the blog posts to conduct a validity test, having students give their own Likert Scale ratings of the tone to determine whether the

Diction analysis is comparable to the common sense of humans (yes, freshmen qualify as human).

Finally, a student identified by her top grade on the semester's first exam accepted my offer to serve as data coordinator, double-checking each message and preparing it for analysis with the Diction software. This was a bottleneck, but a necessary one.

With the semester winding down, we completed that analysis, and I was able to report to the students seven specific message attributes that varied significantly by the race of the blogger, with black-authored posts higher in commonality, cognition, hardship, human-interest, satisfaction, and self-reference, and white-authored posts higher in use of collective terms.

I explain all of this more in a paper titled "Blogging Ferguson in Black and White" that has been submitted to AEJMC for this summer's convention. Whether or not it is accepted, I'm declaring the project a success because of the degree of interest in academic research and analysis that it aroused in my students throughout the semester.

In fact, we're replicating the process this spring with a completely different topic. Stay tuned; we should be able to tell you the difference in tone between Seattle Seahawk and New England Patriot fan blogs, both before and after the most exciting Super Bowl in recent history.

Doug Mendenhall, Ph.D., is instructor and journalist in residence at the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Abilene Christian University, Abilene, Texas. His email address is d1m08a@acu.edu.

Thinking of teaching online? Don't miss Aug. 5 panel

By Wally Metts

At the university where I teach, we were early adopters of online education and, 10 years ago, launched a master's in communication that is entirely online. In retrospect, we started sooner than we should have and worked harder than we needed to. This cautionary tale is just one presentation of a pre-conference panel on Aug. 5 in San Francisco: Tips for putting your courses—and programs—online.

The panel serves as a primer for administrators and faculty members who are considering—or being asked to consider—putting courses or entire programs online. As it turns putting programs online is not as painless or as painful as imagined. The technology

TEACHING

is maturing and research is illuminating how successful online learning communities can prosper as well as how they can fail.

“As it turns out, putting programs online is not as painless or painful as imagined.”

If you have any interest in this, it may be well worth your time and trouble to get to San Francisco a day early. The panel includes vendors, course developers and visionaries. But the most important

thing it offers is answers to your questions.

There will be Q and A for your questions at the pre-conference. But if you want to email your questions or concerns to me ahead of time, I'll make sure they are addressed in the panel. If you can't join us, let me know and I'll make sure it is recorded and send you a link when it's over. Email me at wmetts@arbor.edu. I'd love to hear what you are thinking or wondering about online education.

Wallis C. Metts Jr., Ph.D., is director of graduate studies in communication at Spring Arbor University, Spring Arbor, Mich., and 2015 Head of the Small Programs Interest Group of AEJMC.

Co-chairs call for research papers and reviewers, deadline April 1

Along with the start of the new Spring 2015 Academic Semester comes this research paper competition reminder from Mia Moody-Ramirez and Patrick Sutherland, Co chairs of the SPIG Research Committee.

We invite members of all divisions and interest groups to contribute research papers -- using any methodology, whether quantitative or qualitative -- that focus on telling a story across many platforms (convergence) in journalism and mass communication. We especially encourage authors to submit studies on pedagogy approaches and the effects on students and faculty inside and outside of the classroom.

Members of this division are particularly interested in smaller, teacher-oriented programs. The competition is open to both faculty members and graduate students. Submission deadline is April 1, 2015.

We also seek a few more research paper reviewers (always good for a reappointment/tenure application credit for service to your profession).

For more information, contact the SPIG Research CoChairs: Mia Moody Ramirez of Baylor University at: Mia_Moody@baylor.edu or Patrick Sutherland of Bethany College at: psutherl@bethanyvw.edu

spig news is created by **Richard Hendrickson**, a Los Angeles-based independent journalism professor, and **Carrie Buchanan**, assistant professor in the Tim Russert Department of Communication and Theatre Arts at John Carroll University in Cleveland.

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The Small Programs Interest Group is a group in the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. For more information about AEJMC, go to <http://www.aejmc.org/>