

spig news

Newsletter of AEJMC's Small Programs Interest Group

Summer 2010

Oil spill is Denver 'Hot Topic'

Award-winning investigative reporters join SPIG panel

PRESS coverage of the massive oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico caused by the April 20 Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion will be the "Hot Topic" for a panel discussion Thursday, Aug. 5, at the annual AEJMC convention in Denver.

Anchored by New Orleans *Times-Picayune* investigative reporter David Hammer, the panel will

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include William Dietrich, who won a Pulitzer Prize as part of a *Seattle Times* team for coverage of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill.

The respondents are expected to also include print and television journalists covering the Gulf spill, an oil industry official and a government official. They will discuss the role of the media in how the environmental calamity plays out and perceptions of journalistic ethics in that pursuit.

Moderators will be David Blow of

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HEAD NOTES

Looking at us

By VIVIAN MARTIN

Each June the top officers in SPIG, and all the other AEJMC divisions and interest groups, compile an annual report on our key activities, goals, and misses. The task is pretty straightforward for SPIG, for our priority -- to provide support for

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MARTIN

"Media economics," "internationalizing your curriculum," "using e-portfolios" and "reconsidering Flip video." These discussions on the SPIG e-mail list have been compiled for you in this edition of SPIG news.

Convergence 2

Popular teaching workshop will greet Denver early birds

A day before the AEJMC national conference opens in Denver, early arrivers will be assembled to learn more about how they can teach convergent media theory and practice in journalism programs across the country.

The workshop runs from 1 to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 3. The registration surcharge is \$25.

The Small Programs Interest Group is sponsoring this four-hour "pre-conference" workshop again this year following a very popular session on the same topic last year in Boston. It is aimed at educators and administrators in smaller colleges or universities. Participants will learn hands-on approaches to better preparing students to work with new

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SPIG talks about...

“Putting a Price on Words,” by Andrew Rice

First, go to this link:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/16/magazine/16Journalism-t.html?ref=magazine>

Jack Zibluk of Arkansas State University posted this link to an article in *The New York Times* about the current state of journalism economics, then posed these questions: “How does it affect us? Our teaching? Our research?” He added this observation: “To be honest I am not hearing enough in academic circles about how to deal with the new economics, the new job market, etc. Mostly, I hear ‘just deal with it, pardner. And be sure to get published in dem journals.’”

Following is the response he got from our discussion list.

Vivian Martin, Central Connecticut State University: I agree that journalism education isn’t addressing this enough. We’re all dealing with the retraining and curriculum revisions required by new tools, but there are broader questions about what we’re doing. How do you think SPIG might help bring about productive talk on these and related issues? I’m thinking of the library association group’s work on journalism that you posted a few months ago. The usual response would be, “do a panel,” but, of course,

ECONOMICS

our panels are set for Denver, and the conversation you seek seems like something that should be launched sooner than the next round of panels for the 2011 convention.

In fairness, I think we should note that there are several larger

“So we figure out a way to lead SPIG schools in creating some start-up ventures, and talk about them next year at a pre-conference.”

-- Michael Longinow, Biola

journalism education reform initiatives going on: Carnegie and Knight, for instance. Those efforts do tend to be targeted at large J-schools or, if the players are small, accredited programs.

Is there space we in SPIG might clear for a discussion targeted at teaching-intensive programs? An informal meet-up to see what people are thinking? There hasn’t been much listserv response to these issues, but this isn’t the easiest time of year, as you know.

Michael Longinow, Biola University: Here’s where SPIG can shine (again).

We’re small, so we bank on that. In this case, that banking means we figure out a way to do partnering with other disciplines, such as schools or departments of business or finance, advertising, and public relations or marketing. That’s less necessary at big J-schools where they have resources and grant-writing machines grinding.

So we figure out a way to lead SPIG schools in creating some start-up ventures, and talk about them next year at a pre-conference. If these ventures make some money or break even, great. If they tank, we still have something to talk about. Maybe part of the story is how a small department or school can persuade a donor to pony up venture capital on a media project aimed at a niche audience(s).

Some of this media start-up stuff is being done by non-profits. That’s a radical idea, but I think we can call some of these investigative news teams non-profits if they’re being funded by Carnegie Endowment, Hewlett Foundation, etc.

We don’t need chip-takers (joiners) at the chip auction on this, but the more groups we can persuade to help us gather a crowd and buy food, the better — right?

So we try to pull in Media Management and Economics division and also maybe one or more of the

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SPIG profile: Jim Willis

His 12 books include one on Oklahoma Sooner football

This is a Q&A profile of a Small Programs Interest Group leader. If you would like to nominate someone for the next edition, send a note to the editor, Dr. Richard Hendrickson, at newsprof@mac.com.

What is your current primary job title and employer, and what subjects do you teach?

I am chair and professor of the Department of Communication Studies at Azusa Pacific University, but I am leaving this summer to become chair of the Journalism Department and professor of journalism at Ball State University. I teach a wide range of journalism and mass communication courses, but prefer to teach history of journalism and a senior seminar in communication ethics class.

Tell me an interesting fact about you.

My wife and I foster lost and unwanted dogs and have had as many as five at one time in our home. We also have served as puppy trainers for sight dogs for the blind.

What was your first job?

Actually, I had a newspaper delivery route in my hometown in Oklahoma. I never got used to getting up at 3 a.m. to start my day, however.

Tell me about your education.

Graduated from Midwest City High School in the Oklahoma City area, where I got the journalism bug working for my school paper. Went to the University of Oklahoma for my B.A. in Journalism, then to Texas A&M for my M.A., and the University of Missouri for my Ph.D.

What was your dissertation topic and what is your current



DR. WILLIS

research focus?

The dissertation was "The Editor as People Manager." I have published 12 books over my career, with the latest two coming out this year: "The Mind of a Journalist" (Sage), and "100 Media Moments That Changed America" (Greenwood). The only book which hasn't focused on journalism was one that focused on college football: "Prelude to Greatness: Sooner Football in the 1990s," which was a look at a turbulent era in the life of the University of Oklahoma football program. My co-author was a former OU offensive lineman, Jay Smith, who lived the era.

What do you like about your job and your workplace?

Azusa Pacific University is about the most non-institutional campus you can find. My office is in a one-story bungalow quad that surrounds a beautiful rose garden and fountain. The school is the friendliest and most collegial environment I've ever worked in,

and it has many dedicated faculty who care about their students.

Tell me something about your personal life.

Married to a wonderful woman, Anne, for 10 years. Next year, Anne will complete her second master's degree after graduating with a bachelor's from the University of Kentucky. She teaches English to international students at the college level. I have two sons, Min and Kao. Min is 28 and is a graduate of my alma mater, Oklahoma, while Kao is 23 and just received his associate's degree in Human Services in Indiana.

What other significant achievements have you had?

I developed an international partnership between my former school, the University of Memphis, and German Television ZDF, which grew into an active student and faculty exchange program with two American universities and two German universities. I have also conducted four or five lecture tours of Europe sponsored by the U.S. State Department. I also stay involved in reporting, serving as a special correspondent for my former newspaper, *The Oklahoman*, and last November covered the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall for that paper. I now produce a weekly blog for Newsok.com called "The Virtual Unknown," which looks at the everyday impact of the new media on all of us.

What are your personal or professional goals now?

Take over a thriving, cutting-edge Department of Journalism and work to make it even more prosperous

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SPIG officers -- 2009-2010

Head – **Vivian Martin**

Co-Vice Heads
Susan Lewis
Ginger Carter Miller

Research Chairs
John Jenks
Teresa Heinz Housel

PF&R (professional
freedom and responsibility)
Chairs
Dave Weinstock
Mike Longinow

Teaching Chairs
Jim Willis
Pam Parry

Newsletter editor
Dick Hendrickson

WebMaster
Mitzi Lewis

Secretary
Pam Parry

Membership
Ann Colbert

Hot Topics
Kim Landon
Terry Dalton
David Blow

Liason to Commission on
the Status of Minorities
Jim Simon

Liason to Commission on
the Status of Women
Ann Colbert

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technology in print, broadcast and
Internet media.

“The ‘best practices’ session for convergent teaching is a session you don’t want to miss,” said Dr. Michael Longinow of Biola University. “As you make travel plans, be sure to book your flight and hotel so you can be at this event with your colleagues from SPIG and other interested divisions and interest groups.” Longinow and David Weinstock planned the panel as co-chairs of SPIG’s Professional Freedom and Responsibility (PF&R) program.

Panelists will describe model programs and practices and offer

examples of curricula and course materials, including compact discs, for teaching in news, advertising, public relations, photojournalism and broadcasting.

“You’ll come away inspired to teach better — having filled your notebook with helpful tips and established contacts with helpful peer colleagues from across the nation on how to do convergence better in your classroom,” added Longinow.

“This is going to be a good event,” said SPIG Head Vivian Martin. “Michael and David are working to ensure that presenters in effect teach a lesson so that the take-away value for your \$25 will be high.”

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and meaningful for its majors.

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

I am co-chair of the Teaching Committee for SPIG.

What goal do you have for SPIG?

I wish it all the best in connecting members of journalism departments at smaller universities, and hope it continues to serve as a forum for exchanging useful ideas.

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

Curious, adventurous, a visionary, and collegial.

News briefs...

Dr. John B. (Jack) Zibluk has been promoted to full professor of journalism at Arkansas State University. He has also been elected president of the Faculty Senate at Arkansas State.

John Hanc, SPIG member and associate professor at the New York Institute of Technology, was a panelist at the 5th annual International Association for Literary Journalism Studies conference, held May 20-22, at Roehampton University in London.

Hanc spoke about pedagogical strategies for literary journalism teachers. In April, Hanc’s 2009 book,

“The Coolest Race on Earth”—a memoir of his experiences running the 2005 Antarctica Marathon (published by Chicago Review Press)—won an award in the annual American Society of Journalists and Authors writing competition.

Dr. Evene Estwick, assistant professor of communication studies at Wilkes University in Wilkes-Barre, PA was awarded a National Association of Television Programming Executives (NATPE) Faculty Development Grant for Summer 2010. As a mass communication instructor she plans to bring back into her classes insights into how programming is done at the network level.

Brian Steffen named Teacher of the Year for 2010

Dr. Brian J. Steffen, professor and chairman of Communication Studies at Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa, has been named the SPIG Teacher of the Year for 2010. He will be honored Aug. 6 at a SPIG luncheon held in conjunction with the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication annual meeting in Denver.

“This contest allows SPIG to honor someone among us who is doing something at the heart of our mission: teaching,” said Dr. Vivian Martin, SPIG Head and associate professor/journalism director, Central Connecticut State University. “When several of us heard that Brian Steffen was the winner of Teacher of the Year, it seemed as if there was an instant recognition, a sense of, ‘of course he did.’ Brian’s contributions to SPIG, his participation in our discussions about journalism education, and his support of other members have made many of us aware of his teaching and leadership abilities. We look forward to honoring him in Denver.”

In selecting Steffen, the judges reviewed a portfolio of materials, including a letter of nomination from a former student. The student wrote that Steffen was a wonderful professor and “he also served as a father figure. With my Dad being over four hours away through my high school and college career, I often lacked a male figure in my life. Brian fulfilled that role and more.

“In fact, I can’t help but share a story that shows Brian’s commitment to his vocation and his students,” the student continued. “I had decided in my senior year of school that law school may be the path I wanted to take. I signed up for the December LSAT, only to



DR. STEFFEN

have the worst snow storm of the winter forecasted for the day of the exam. With the testing location 30 minutes from my home, and me being nervous enough without worrying about the snow, Brian offered to drive me to the exam in his hometown in addition to taking me to breakfast before the test. I ended up taking a different route than law, but will always remember his kindness.”

Steffen holds a doctor of philosophy degree from the University of Iowa in Iowa City and a master of science and bachelor of arts degrees from Iowa State University in Ames. Steffen has taught an array of journalism courses at that university since 1989, and was named department chair in 1999. He won Simpson’s Distinguished Teaching Award in 2002 and 2008 – both times winning in his first year of eligibility

for the award.

Among his many achievements, he guided a massive revision of departmental curriculum to and creation of Department of Communication & Media Studies in 2008. He has led multiple student trips overseas in France, Italy, England, Switzerland and Austria. Steffen also served as executive director of the Iowa College Media Association.

A dedicated member of SPIG, Steffen served as chair of Small Programs Interest Group in 2001-2002. He also has served as SPIG secretary-treasurer, research chair, membership chair, list serve administrator, and vice chair. Additionally, he served as both the president and the executive director of the Iowa College Media Association and as a member on both the Student Press Law Center Advisory Council and the Associated Collegiate Press Advisory Council. He also led efforts to establish greater ties between Iowa journalism educators and newspaper professionals through the creation of the Iowa Newspaper Foundation Student Journalism Committee.

Prior to joining the Simpson College faculty, he was an adjunct instructor of journalism at Iowa State University and he worked in the professional media. He was the desk editor for *The Associated Press* in Des Moines, the associate editor, Ames (Iowa) *Daily Tribune* and editor of the Adel (Iowa) *Dallas County News*.

His research interests include defamation law in general and specifically as it pertains to private plaintiffs, including the free-speech and free-press rights of students. He

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following, depending on the kinds of start-ups we see: Advertising, Communications Technology, Magazine, Newspaper, Radio-TV and VisCom

Keep in mind that a huge growth industry in media in this country has an international focus. So we pull in AEJMC members who have their finger on the trajectory of smaller versions of Telemundo, Televisa, and La Opinion. Same for Korean, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Filipino, and other ethnic media online.

What I see Jack trying to say to us all (sorry if this isn't what you were saying, Jack) is that it's time to put or shut up about convergence. Sure we can talk about teaching it and make it an effective learning tool — getting students doing “the real thing.” But it's not real, we're hearing from (the Poynter Online columnist) Romenesko week after week, unless it can pay for itself.

So it's about figuring out how to monetize it. And if we can lead the way in doing that kind of outside-the-box thinking on smaller campuses, we're doing everybody a service.

Zibluk responds: It is wonderful to work with colleagues who “get it.”

I really think we can be the tail that wags the dog in some respect. How? I dunno.

I AM concerned (and it's my own perception, open to challenge) that as the journalism world changes, the academic world (yes, I am perhaps making sweeping generalizations, but....) seems to be distancing itself from the profession and the “real

world” at a time when journalism educators can really make a difference.

Among AEJMC-affiliated journalism educators, the SPIG folks seem to me to be the most engaged in bridging the gaps between the real world and the professional world.

We're still writers, right? And some of us even get some credit for it.

Since most of us also are involved in teaching and advising, and that makes it hard to find time to branch out, how about collaborating on a series of articles, maybe a book or

“How about collaborating on a series of articles, maybe a book or three?”

-- Jack Zibluk, Arkansas State

three? Let's put something together that people will see and aim for it to be published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, *The New York Times* or other venues that people will actually see. We can endorse it officially as a group in Denver.

Vivian (Martin) correctly points out that the Knight group, led by Columbia, Northwestern, Berkley et al, has been reporting on the changes for some time.

But what I haven't seen is recommendations or ideas of the role of educators in all this.

Should we be focusing on training for a “job market” or should we be focusing more on a “liberal arts” paradigm, stressing that in the world of social media EVERYONE

is a journalist, so writing skills and legal and ethical awareness are of paramount to everyone?

I can't answer that but my balance is shifting to the latter; I think media literacy is becoming more important to everyone, especially in a field where traditional jobs are disappearing much faster than new ones are being created.

Despite my long association with AEJMC, I don't know how to go to the powers that be and say, “Hey, you need to give a damn about the practice of journalism education, address media literacy and responsibility in society and reach out beyond your arcane and obscure four-way anova and social-construction-of-reality theories or you'll research your way into irrelevance.”

OK, I shared my rant to the only audience of receptive colleagues I know.

Thanks for listening, if one can listen on-line.

Alan Blanchard, Cornerstone University (MI): Bottom line: It keeps coming back to monetizing, how to monetize the web ... while there are a few financially successful examples, those involve specialized niche areas and large audiences (both/and not either/or), i.e. WSJ online, Huffington Post, etc.

In Jeff Jarvis' book, “What Would Google Do?” he makes the declaration, “You cannot compete with free.”

That statement is huge and explains part of what has happened to the print newspaper industry, i.e. Craig's List, etc.

Larger newspaper chains are

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Using E-portfolios as a tool for assessment

Sandra Ellis of the University of Wisconsin, River Falls, asked: "We are considering requiring ePortfolios for students in our News Practicum class. What experience have you had with something like this?"

SPIG discussion list readers answered:

Vivian Martin, Central Connecticut State University: I have been looking at this issue in relation to assessment. We need to collect work in portfolios for one of our assessment initiatives. We don't want everything in it, and we want students to do a sort of capstone essay before graduation. I put this on the listserv last year maybe and got a couple of responses. There wasn't a lot of response, and it also became clear we were talking about different things. Some people were using the e-portfolio as a place for students to park and show their work. Others used it as a place faculty (and possibly accrediting teams) would access for ongoing assessment.

The latter would require a secure portfolio assessment. I didn't get much campus help because there

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isn't a critical mass of faculty interest on campus or within the CSU system, so nobody will put up the money. Even a Moodle plug-in wasn't a solution because there wasn't much other interest. I am now thinking that an interim solution for us might be simply having students put their work on a CD for now, especially since we're collecting the material once (it's one of a few assessment activities). A CD would make it easy to access the papers and multimedia work.

Carol Dykers, Salem College (NC): Our department requires students in Senior Seminar (which I teach) to create a portfolio CD, following the attached guidelines-- we've been doing this for about four years-- had paper copies for about four years before that, and just a senior thesis project before that. So, over time, our assessment process has evolved. The three-page attachment has a LAST page that each senior fills out and puts onto her (or his) portfolio CD as a kind of TABLE OF CONTENTS for what is on the CD-- so we go to this document first to check

WHAT the seniors have included. And we talk with majors through their careers at Salem about saving items for BOTH their portfolio for our assessment purposes (and accreditation purposes) AND also as an opportunity for them to save their best work in several areas important to finding a professional position in COMM these days.

Often, their senior thesis projects are very important evidence-- everything from documentaries and strong photo essays to PR plans for local organizations to scholarly studies that get them into grad schools.

Martin: Thanks, Carol. This is a great example. I'll certainly pass this around as an example of something we could implement now without spending a lot of money on e-portfolio systems. Small program really find creative solutions.

Kay Colley, Texas Wesleyan University: Just attended an institute on pedagogy from our CETL. Check out their website for more information on this particular topic:

<http://learningobsessed.edublogs.org/category/pedagogy/e-portfolios/>.

Cabrini seniors show their web site at the White House

A multimedia web site that Cabrini College senior communication majors created was presented to the White House in May. The site informs elementary school teachers about domestic violence and provides ways to help students living with domestic violence. It was part of a presentation to Lynn Rosenthal, White House advisor on Violence Against Women.

The Children As Witness Project website includes video

interviews, interactive quizzes, mini-documentaries, a timeline of domestic violence legal evolution, and an interactive map of social services. It shows teachers the warning signs in student behavior, ways to approach children about the topic, steps teachers can take in the classroom, and services available to children.

It also discusses ways that school districts can develop a safety plan

for students involved in domestic violence situations. Explore the site at www.cabrini.edu/DomesticViolence.

Associate Professor Cathy Yungmann, who managed the project, will present her ideas about integrating multimedia creation into the communication curriculum at the SPIG Best Practices in Convergent Media Education preconference seminar Aug. 3 in Denver.

So, you've been asked to help write a book?

How to fit that in with your other academic responsibilities

By James Simon

Teach three courses. Advise the campus media. Chair a faculty committee. Advise 25 journalism students.

And write a book?

When two well-known environmental communication researchers – David B. Sachsman and JoAnn M. Valenti

-- asked me to join them in 2000 and work on an original book of research on environmental reporters, I thought of all those other responsibilities I had -- and still quickly said yes.

After all, I had a sabbatical coming up where I should be able to get a lot of it done. There were three authors to split the work. I had been an environmental reporter with *The Associated Press*, so it was a subject close to my heart.

It took 10 long years, but the fruit of our labors -- "The Environment Reporters in the 21st Century" -- has just been published in hardcover by Transaction.

<http://www.transactionpub.com/title/Environment-Reporters-in-the-21st-Century-978-1-4128-1415-7.html>

There are lessons here for any other SPIGers thinking about carving out enough time for a book.

It was a long decade of work. All those years of data analysis and SPSS work in my doctoral program finally paid off as we examined the 652 reporters, region by region. Sure, you can do a lot of the work off-season in

the summer and Christmas break. But I learned there are many, many stages to producing a book and they do not always fall nicely into the winter and summer timeslots.

The first stage was to establish whether there was a market, a need. My co-authors and I realized there was no comprehensive, comparative data on environment reporters in the United States. We launched an ambitious undertaking: interview every reporter who covers the environment for a daily newspaper or television station on a regular basis, region by region.

Six years went by. Another sabbatical arrived, one that allowed us to get away from the look at individual regions and instead look across the country for national trends. And we found them.

We found environment reporters and their sources are eager to get news out, but not always in the same way, or at the same time. There is a constant struggle among the thousands of environmental activists, corporate public relations people, government officials, and scientists to frame the message in a way that is advantageous to their point of view. These competing interests need to understand how journalists think and function.

We divided the results into three parts. The first, *Environment Reporting*, includes a review of the literature and a detailed explanation of the methodology of the current study. Part II, *The Environment Reporters of the 21st Century*, describes the results of the present research. Part III, *The Craft: Telling the Environment Story*, provides in-depth accounts of environment

reporters at work. The final chapter puts this research in historical perspective, viewing it in terms of the economic decline of the newspaper business and of local television news.

My background as an AP reporter -- get it right, get it fast -- did not do me any favors here. I had to slow down my internal work clock, spend more time thinking than reacting, and look for comprehensive answers and elements of theory building rather than quick ledes. And I was always conscious of this academic balancing act of teaching, research and service.

Would I do it over again? The book project greatly aided my academic career. I got to work with two of the giants in the field of environmental communication. We generated separate studies on single and multiple regions of the country, tested the results as conference papers and then published journal articles. This process produced a large volume of well-received work and was pivotal in helping me to get promotion to full professor.

Now that it's done, now that it's out, a great feeling of satisfaction overwhelms the memories of many SPSS runs and the endless reordering and formatting of tables.

Never say never...

Sachsman, D.B., Simon, J. and Valenti, J.M. (2010). *Environment Reporters in the 21st Century*. New Brunswick NJ: Transaction Publishers, ISBN: 978-1-4128-1415-7.

James Simon is director of the journalism program at Fairfield University in Connecticut and a former Head of SPIG.



DR. SIMON

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faculty in small programs where teaching is the main mission -- drives our group's activities. From our upcoming "Best Practices" preconference to our continued co-sponsorship of "GIFT," our activities are designed to help members push their teaching further. Even our selection of research papers for "Scholar2Scholar" is shaped by the desire to highlight research that is relevant to the classroom.

Our use of a chip for a refereed research panel on social justice issues in journalism education is another example of how we take an AEJMC format that other groups might use more traditionally and make it our own.

What I've come to think of as "the SPIG difference" is at the forefront of my mind this week not only because the officers and I are preparing the annual report, but also because SPIG is up for assessment at the AEJMC convention. From what I have gathered, assessment at AEJ, which a group goes through every five years, is not the exhausting, sleep-losing experience some of us might associate with that word. A few past heads, current vice heads and I will attend an "interview" with AEJ bigwigs who'll ask questions and give us their views on where we are as an IG (Interest Group) and where we might go. Fortunately, there is a time limit of 30 minutes. The AEJ leaders will have read our annual reports and newsletters, so they'll draw from those for their questions

I'm looking forward to telling our story. When one thinks about how we have taken our core idea

of programming and activities that support faculty in the position of having to do it all—teach 4/4 loads, administer and build programs, serve as internship director, advise campus media, and in some cases do creative work and scholarship on the side—and build on that each year, it is a point of pride. Everything hasn't worked the first time out, but the ongoing dialogue between the leadership and members has allowed us to integrate new ideas.

When Ron Hollander became SPIG Head in 2007, he encouraged us to step up activity and do more

"The ongoing dialogue between the leadership and members has allowed us to integrate new ideas."

than the usual convention stuff SPIG had been doing. Two ideas went into development in fall 2007. The first was the Scholarship of Application, which was designed to acknowledge that many of our members are still engaged in freelance writing and draw on these experiences in the classroom. We gave our first SOA award in 2008.

The other venture was a Best Practices contest, which wasn't ready to launch in spring 2008 alongside the Scholarship of Application. It took time to define what sort of best practices we were looking for and how such initiatives would be judged. Although we ran a best practices preconference in 2009, we created the event by taking some of the panels proposed for the

convention and making them part of the preconference. We officially launched a best practices competition this year.

The model still needs tweaking (and more applicants), but Michael Longinow and David Weinstock, who have nurtured the best practices program from its inception, are to be congratulated for sticking with the project. (And we can all show our appreciation by signing on for this year's preconference.) The pre-conference focuses on teaching convergence, which SPIG members responding to a survey in fall 2008 indicated was high on their lists as an area for which they wanted more programming and help.

As information elsewhere in the newsletter demonstrates, we've got convergence issues throughout our Denver program. I expect that my successors will continue to provide programming to help members figure out how to integrate multimedia throughout the curriculum, though the Best Practices showcase will go on hiatus for 2011. At last year's business meeting members voted to alternate Best Practices and Scholarship of Application, so in the fall the calls you see will be for freelance work and related pedagogical discussion.

I think we've got some momentum in our efforts to identify exemplary work to inspire us. Importantly, the Teacher of the Year award is an annual honor that has become a centerpiece at our annual luncheon (Friday) at the convention. Pam Parry, co-chair for Teaching and last year's winner,

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monetizing the Web and employing Web-side only journalists, ad sales people, etc. However, the revenues generated on their Web-side ventures are not even close to the volume of ad revenue losses on the print side of the house.

Size absolutely matters, but even when you have size it's still flying in the face of Jarvis' maxim, "You cannot compete with free." I own a small weekly newspaper in a county of 35,000 population, with a paid print circulation of 2,000 ... while we have a Web site and have started selling advertising on it; there's no way I could hope to earn even a minute fraction of our print ad revenues if I went Web-only. While it would reduce print expense and U.S. Postal Service delivery expense by going Web-only, you still have personnel expense for ad sales rep, journalist salaries, etc.

Appreciate the discussion; it's an area of keen interest for me, both academically and professionally.

Margo Wilson, California University of Pennsylvania: As we talk about being entrepreneurial -- and I know one solution is for us all to go to our local media and foundations and try to start news bureaus -- is there a way for SPIG, itself, to be entrepreneurial? Jack mentions maybe we could do some articles or something. Maybe SPIG schools also could somehow team up to apply for grants from Knight, or somebody, to fund how small potato schools and

small potato media actually pull off the stuff that the big dogs have been chewing on for some time now.

James Simon, Fairfield: ...so if we want to protect the print ad revenue stream, let's stop posting everything online and generate a lot more "print edition only" items that are clearly marked as such in print edition. That's what the Hearst papers, which just bought up all four dailies in my area of Connecticut, is doing with some success. Make readers feel they are losing out on something if they don't

"If we want to protect the print ad revenue stream, let's stop posting everything online and generate a lot more 'print edition only' items that are clearly marked as such in the print edition."

-- James Simon, Fairfield

get print in addition to online

Hearst also has the more reasonable expectation of financial returns of about 12-16 percent. And they have totally downplayed Monday to Wednesday editions, putting out as little as 24 pp, and pumped all their energy into Thursday to Sunday. So far it seems to be working. They are actually hiring.

Blanchard: That is interesting approach Hearst Newspapers is taking. And readjusting profit expectations is a legitimate point. I've worked for newspaper chains, Boone Newspapers, for one, that budgeted for and achieved 30-percent plus profit margins back in the '90s. Other chains did, too. Kind of tough, unrealistic in this current economic

times and rapidly changing media landscape.

Ann Colbert, Indiana University Purdue/Fort Wayne: I do think we "get it" and it's possible that what helps us stay connected is that we are "small programs" and can change direction a lot more easily than a big school with experts in many areas. Think of a literature department: there's Victorian lit, modern fiction, drama, early American lit, etc., etc. All these areas (and many more) are seen as essential to a student of literature, and trying to make a change is difficult. Even if faculty retire, the first thought is to replace them with the same narrow expert area.

The same is true in large Journalism departments/schools, and that's why it's difficult to make changes. We're small enough that we've had to straddle areas of expertise and can see the real needs and demands on our graduates.

There's nothing wrong with this kind of specialization if you're able to create a demand for your classes through offerings for graduate students. Many college departments/schools are primarily serving those who will eventually fill the slots left by the same faculty who taught them the same material.

Think of it: Many of our university colleagues are people who have gone to school and graduated so they can go to school again. Eventually they graduate grad school and seek a position to teach in schools. It's all they've known. We really can't expect them to change. But we can change, and know we will have to.

How to ‘internationalize’ your curriculum

Donna Harrington-Lueker, Salve Regina University (Newport, RI), asked the SPIG discussion list: “Does anyone have any experience ‘internationalizing’ their curriculum? Global issues/ social justice are a huge part of our university’s mission, and we’re looking at trying to make our course offerings in journalism/PR/ media reflect that in specific course offerings where the focus would be on such things (vs. weaving them into existing courses). Advice on other strategies (study abroad, service learning, etc.) is also welcome.”

Here’s what our readers said:

Mary Alice Basconi, East Tennessee State:

Go to Borderzine.com and see what Zita Arocha is up to at UT-El Paso. Great resources for this are available via the webinars at Poynter.

Vivian Martin, Central Connecticut State University:

This topic is on the priority list for our journalism major. Our campus is a state-designated center for international education (each of the four regional campuses in our system has a niche) and our

SPIG Q&A

goal is to align the major with one of the school’s priorities. We’ve been doing this by choice of campus speakers (We had an *LA Times* Moscow bureau chief visit in the fall), course content, and encouraging study abroad, including well-developed courses abroad during winter, spring, and summer. I won’t get too involved in this e-mail message, as I am in the midst of writing up an assessment of my most recent Course Abroad.

The main tip I’d give is: Make

“I think all sorts of classes are ripe for inclusion of an international component, even if it’s just a case study woven into an overall theme.”

-- Vivian Martin, Central Connecticut

use of your school’s international partnerships. CCSU has quite a number. For the most part people utilize the partnerships for back and forth student semester abroad programs. But for the latest course I led, a spring break trip to London as part of a semester-long class on British journalism, I built a relationship with a journalism prof at one of our partner universities. So, in addition to visiting the BBC, *Telegraph*, *Guardian*, Frontline Club, and Press Complaints

Commission, my students spent part of an afternoon interacting with students at the University of Hertfordshire....

I think these types of partnerships can open up joint projects using web tools for communication. That’s what I am adding on next.

My goal is to have 50 percent of journalism students participating in the Courses Abroad or the longer Study Abroad program within five years. The spring break trip has limitations, though the fact that it is embedded in an existing class has advantages that

have made it very attractive on our campus. Something like 183 students went to various points around the world as part of spring break courses. Students like them because they’re earning credits, having fun, and they’re just paying for the travel/boarding.

For summer and winter trips, of course, they pay for tuition and travel.

Thus far I have done the more typical Western stops, but I am now looking at ways to get the students to sign on to Ghana, or maybe somewhere in Asia or South America. Our international office would like faculty to take more students to these parts of the world. It’s cheaper, but also the

See **CURRICULUM**, page 14

SPIG's Denver schedule

The Small Programs Interesting Group has a busy schedule of panels and programs for the AEJMC Convention in Denver, August 3-7. Early bird registration ends July 6. For information, go to <http://www.aejmcdenver.org/>

Here is the SPIG schedule:

TUESDAY

1-5 p.m.

Pre-conference session

Best Practices in Convergent Media Education for Small Programs

<http://www.aejmcdenver.org/?p=692>

Participants in this workshop, aimed at educators and administrators in departments and schools within smaller colleges or universities, will learn hands-on approaches to better teaching in convergent methods. The audience will hear presentations based on successful convergent teaching from proven educators who specialize in one or more of the following: advertising, public relations, print-based news, photojournalism and broadcast classes. Participants will come away inspired to teach better, and will leave with syllabi, CDs filled with helpful tips and exercises, and notes from dialogue with helpful peer colleagues from across the nation.

WEDNESDAY

10-11:30 a.m.

The Three Rs of Small Programs: Recruitment, Retention, and Reconnection

A constant concern for Small Programs is getting and keeping students, and then reconnecting with graduates when they're gone. This panel will discuss some innovative ways to do all three with a small budget and a lot of creativity. Sponsors: **CCJA, SPIG**

11:45-1 p.m.

Bringing best practices in Public Relations to the Small Program Environment

Public Relations is often a large major in our

Small Programs, and it is a challenge to offer students the same type of resources that might be offered at a larger university with more established contacts and alumni. This panel will discuss ways to make those connections happen on a shoestring, often, with networking and creativity. **CCJA, SPIG**

3:15-4:45 p.m.

Mini-plen – GIFT (Great Ideas for Teachers) **SPIG, Scholastic, CCJA** (lead)

5 -6 p.m.

Brian Steffen, SPIG Teacher of the Year, is making a keynote at the Issues Facing Campus Media session.

THURSDAY

8:15-9:45 a.m.

"The Invisible line between Blogging and Reporting"

The term "blogger" is being redefined. This session will look at blogging as a real form of journalism and will teach you how to introduce blogging into your newspaper curriculum. The session will look at the difference between journalistic blogs that offer factual reporting and well-researched content, versus blogs that are filled with opinion and bias and blogs that are simply online journals. The session will also show you how to teach your students to use crowd sourcing data in a responsible way. **CCJA, SPIG**

11:45 a.m.-1:15 p.m.--

Hot Topics

From the 40th anniversary of the Chicago Democratic Convention featuring Tom Hayden of the Chicago Seven, to a panel of Pulitzer Prize Winners discussing the future of the industry, "HOT TOPICS" continues to be one hot ticket at the AEJMC Conference. In Denver, the panel will focus on the story that has consumed news columns, broadcasts and webcasts, the explosion of an off-shore oil rig and coverage of its impact on the environment. **Media Ethics, SPIG** (Details, page 1).

See **SCHEDULE**, page 13

SCHEDULE, from page 12

1:30-3 p.m.Scholar-to-Scholar session **SPIG****5:15-6:30 p.m.**

Refereed Research "Considering Justice in Journalism Education"

A truly lofty goal: Students understand the really big issues and report about them in multiple media. One way to get there is integrating social justice issues into the journalism curriculum, from the first communication course through senior capstones. See examples and hear how it works from faculty. An NGO at the center of global student communication helps connect the dots. **SPIG**

6:45-8:15 p.m.

SPIG Members Meeting

8:30 p.m.

SPIG off-site social. Tentatively scheduled for Katie Mullen's Irish Pub. <http://www.katiemullens.com/>

FRIDAY**12:15-1:30 p.m.**

Off-site Luncheon and Teacher of the Year award presentation

Congratulations to **Dr. Brian Steffen**, our SPIG Teacher of the Year 2010! Brian's accomplishments will be just one of the things we'll celebrate on Friday, Aug. 6, in Denver at the annual SPIG (and friends) Luncheon. We've got a special hearty lunch buffet set up for all of us at Maggiano's Little Italy in nearby (walking distance) Denver Pavilions. The cost is \$23 and includes all you care to eat, plus, tea, water and coffee (and tax and tip). Adult beverages are available on your own tab :-). We will provide receipts for travel reimbursement at the luncheon **YOUR RSVP IS NEEDED.**

Please send your reservation check, made payable to **VIVIAN MARTIN by Aug. 1** to Ginger Carter Miller, Department of Mass Communication,

CBX 032 • Georgia College & State University, Milledgeville, Ga., 31061.

1:45-3 p.m.

"Advice for Advisers: What's Next in Student Media, and How Can We Get There on a Budget?"

As the world of professional journalism shifts from print to on line, should student newspapers follow? Let's find some examples of programs where student papers have web sites and share ideas about how they work and supplement the teaching of journalism. Are they supplemental means of "publishing" the paper? What examples can we find of student newspapers that are using print, broadcast and online channels simultaneously?

Are advisers being urged to cut budgets for printing and reach on-campus readers via the Internet? What will happen to readership and advertising support for campus newspapers if the budget authorities prevail? Also, are student editors using personal media such as Facebook and Twitter to gather news or promote readership? **SPIG, Internships & Careers**

3:30-5 p.m.

A Generational Ethics Gap, or a Recognition of New Realities?

Would you go to jail to protect a source? For some millennials, such an idea might seem quaintly outmoded. Is there an ethical divide between students, and over-40 mainstream media practitioners and teachers? This panel looks at research about a generational ethics gap; explores the pressures on student journalists, including students at private colleges and historically black universities, and on student publications; examines the ethical dilemmas that online and other journalists face; considers whether the idea of objectivity is outdated, and tries to find common ground among the competing constituencies. Can we do this in 1 1/2 hours? We're going to try. **Scholastic, SPIG**

spig news is edited and paginated using In-Design CS3 by **Dr. Richard Hendrickson**, a Los Angeles-based associate professor for Cleveland's John Carroll University. You may call him at 440-570-2779 or 323-806-1427, or send e-mail to newsprof@mac.com.

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differences are more profound. For example, we have a field school in Ghana, which would actually be an interesting place to go from a journalism point of view (it's a democracy and there's a lot of action around mobile phones and news), but this is a learning curve for me and the students. First, I need time to parachute in and figure out what kind of course I want to build (that requires getting a curriculum grant or something like it) and then I have to woo students. I put out some feelers on Ghana among students. A few students were horrified, "Where would we stay in Africa? In huts?" (Actually, our partner is the University of the Cape Coast, which is on the ocean. Beautiful.)

But that's what we come up with when we attempt to internationalize the curriculum. SPIG sponsored a panel on this with the International Division a couple of years ago. A panelist who chastised some of us for being focused on taking students to Paris and similar European cities (instead of the developing world) came off a bit self-righteous, but she made good points about the tendencies of Study Abroad efforts. Nevertheless, she was overlooking some realities about American students and their parents. Students and their parents grow up wanting to see Buckingham Palace or the Eiffel Tower, and they're not going to be too eager to travel elsewhere until they have those experiences. Some of my students spent a bit of time sending cell phone photos to parents and touching base with parents who were living

vicariously and just pleased that they could help give their children the opportunity to go out of the country. In that context Ghana, though probably a more profound experience in cultural differences, is a harder sell. I'll keep trying, though the most immediate trip will be Paris. Back by popular demand.

Edna Bautista, Chaminade University (Hawaii): When I ran the pre-convention workshop for the International Communication Division for AEJMC Toronto in 2004, we had participants brainstorm ideas for internationalizing parts of a class to an entire course (start small and progress to bigger changes). The result was a booklet published in 2005 called "50 Fabulous Ways to Internationalize Your Journalism and Mass Communication Courses." The booklet was sold with the GIFT journals when CCJA, SPIG and the ICD co-sponsored GIFT. I am not sure if it has sold out, but someone can contact ICD or AEJMC HQ to see if there are any copies left. If the booklets are out of print and no longer selling, I do have a PDF copy to share. It may be a little outdated now since new media technology has sprung up since then, but the booklet has some good starting points.

Martin: Edna's brainstorming project sounds rich and maybe something we could take forward in light of new technology. As I recall, one of our members who presented on our combined panel with IAD in 2008 shared how her students used Facebook to contact contemporaries in Brazil and China, two countries whose

economies/advertising were of interest to the class. I think the member was Karie Hollerbach from Southeast Missouri (I am hoping she is reading this and can correct me). This was an example of having interacting with people from another country without having to travel.

I think all sorts of classes are ripe for inclusion of an international component, even if it's just a case study woven into an overall theme. In my Reporting Cultural Diversity course I will bring in some examples of reportage of race and immigration issues from elsewhere to give students a flavor of issues elsewhere and media coverage, as well as a different way of looking at US coverage. In the Web class, I will be introducing news games and will be working with students to do a small game using social media. We're doing something around water to align the project with an interdisciplinary campus project on the topic.

That lends itself to some information about the dirty water many people in the world must deal with. Journalism Theory (spring) is a really good place for internationalizing because the exploration of journalism's role in society and the forms news might take opens the course up for looking at different cultures. The important point is that internationalizing the journalism curriculum, especially for small programs, doesn't have to be dedicated, stand-alone courses on a topic (though those stand-alone courses are important for adding depth when you can swing it).

Consider becoming a leader for SPIG

By Vivian Martin, SPIG Head

This is the time of year we start looking for people to help us develop SPIG. Holding an officer position is a good way to get to know other SPIG members better and build a network of other journalism, public relations, and mass communication educators, and it looks good at promotion and tenure time.

We needed several new faces. SPIG continues to encourage research in areas that concern faculty in small programs, and recent co-chairs have done a great job attracting more papers for peer review. The Research chairs also run the Scholarship of Application award (explained below), which the membership elected to run in alternating years-the next one will be spring 2011 -- further indicating the importance of this post. We need a co-chair for Research.

The current co-chairs, **Teresa Housel** and **John Jenks**, were an efficient team this year; when we added a refereed panel on social justice issues in journalism education, the two integrated it into our program smoothly, creating a call for papers and recruiting reviewers. Teresa plans to vacate the post (but will still be with SPIG), creating an opening.

We also need a co-chair for Professional Freedom and Responsibility (PF&R). As illustrated by the best practices preconference **Michael Longinow** and **David Weinstock** are

planning for Denver, PF & R chairs develop activities that highlight professional concerns. David is a candidate for co vice head, leaving his PF & R slot open. (The general practice of AEJMC Division and Interest Groups, SPIG included, is to move a vice head -- we have two -- up to Head. The two vice heads have agreed that **Ginger Carter** will be the candidate for SPIG Head this year. This opens a vice head slot.)

At last year's business meeting we talked some about ways to increase membership and give it some sustainable momentum beyond the 100 (plus or minus 5) it has been at for the last few years. For that, we need a membership campaign, something possibly undertaken by a committee. We don't know for sure. Maybe you have an idea.

In addition to the officer positions, there are several other jobs that need to be done: newsletter editor, Web site editor, liaisons to the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on the Status of Minorities. We have work for anyone who wants to play a role in building SPIG.

Officers will be elected during the annual business meeting Thursday, Aug. 5, in Denver. If you are interested in a particular position or want to know more about the responsibilities, contact SPIG Head Vivian Martin, martinv@ccsu.edu <<mailto:martinv@ccsu.edu>> , or Senior Vice Head Ginger Carter, ginger.carter@gcsu.edu <<mailto:ginger.carter@gcsu.edu>> .

Professor's daughter starts a school paper

SPIG member John (Jack) Zibluk is feeling lots of pride in his 10-year-old daughter, Kate, who started an online newspaper for her school, Blessed Sacrament in Jonesboro, AR.

According to a story in the *Catholic Schools Herald*, posted on the Arkansas Catholic Web site, Kate proposed the venture to her parents while on vacation with them in Boston. Kate's father teaches photojournalism and is an associate professor of journalism and printing at Arkansas State University, where her mother is director of university

communications.

The fourth grader said she got the idea from watching television shows that had school newspapers. Armed with some advice from her parents, she enlisted support from the principal and two teachers, and the first edition of the *The Blessed Sun* came out last November. The name is a bow to the local daily newspaper, *The Jonesboro Sun*.

To read the full Catholic Schools Herald story, go to <http://www.arkansas-catholic.org/article.php?id=2144>.

Are you 'so over' Flip video?

SPIG discussion offers insights on cameras, curriculum

Vivian Martin, Central Connecticut State University:

I'm updating inventory for my program and may add some new cameras. I purchased a number of Olympus/Nikon SLRs for our photojournalism course, but I also purchased several Flip cameras for use in Web journalism and other classes. That purchase was two years ago. The Flip cameras are primarily used by students who have not taken video production and hence are not allowed to check out the video cameras from the Media Center. Students who have taken the course are allowed to check out the video cameras throughout the semester. I was chatting with a newspaper friend who bought several Flips for reporters a few years ago but pulled back. Another teaching colleague told me she no longer purchased Flip cameras and is "so over" them now that more students have smart phones and can use those for quick photos. Are any of you in the same camp?

By the way, does anyone have any experience with the Nikon 5000 (or the Canon counterpart)? I have been looking to purchase a DSLR for personal use. Maybe I am just lazy, but I don't like lugging a still AND

video camera, so I am doing summer school to get extra money so I can get a better personal camera. I thought that if the combination still/video is satisfying I might consider a couple for the program. The reviews seem to indicate that the Nikon still does stills better than video, while the Canon counterpart got the nod for sharper video. I see myself shooting more stills so am willing to make the tradeoff with Nikon, and I'm assuming the video is better than what I can shoot on my old Canon Powershot.

"A device like the Flip camera forces students to get up close on their subjects, where the best images are."

-- David Weinstock, U of Texas at Tyler

Brian Steffen, Simpson: Yikes! I hope that people aren't over Flips: I just bought 15 of them for my program. We so far find them great for basic instruction on uses of the camera. We do have two new Sony Digicams that they "graduate" to once they've mastered the Flip. I don't know if my students are late adopters or not, but few of them have phones that shoot video. In fact, we did some research earlier this year and found that only about 15 percent of our students had smart phones. (Also, only about 6 percent of them were on Twitter.)

Ginger Carter Miller, Georgia College and State University: No! Flips continue to be a big part of my

public relations blog exercises. My ad students use them to do roughcuts of commercials. We did some awesome "happening" videos for our campus production of "Rent." And they're still useful for breaking news in print. This year I also had several students use them for intros for internship applications videos.

John B. (Jack) Zibluk, Arkansas State University: It depends on your purpose. A Flip camera can give you a serviceable clip for interviews, etc, especially if you use a small tripod.

Sound quality can be a problem.

As a photojournalism person, Flip cameras vs. higher end is analogous to a point-and-shoot vs. a good SLR. A decent point

and shoot is adequate to most basic needs, such as headshots, lineups, etc. Flip cameras are fine for some basics the same way. But besides poor sound quality, the picture quality is grainy. However the clips you get are easy to maintain, edit, upload and all that. But the biggest problem is sound. The new Nikons and Canons have plugins for remote mikes. They also have higher-resolution files. The Canon 5000 gives you movie quality clips for higher end stuff and a remote-mike plug in.

In my personal work, I use a Nikon D90 and I am basically satisfied with it. Here's a piece I did with it: http://www.youtube.com/user/JackZibluk - p/u/1/99PARw_Z6_4

See **FLIP VIDEO**, page 17

FLIP VIDEO, from page 16

The bottom line is that there is no one-best camera. You need to assess your needs and budget and decide accordingly.

Mary Carmen Cupito, Northern Kentucky University: We also found sound to be the biggest issue with Flips. Also, they are fine on medium close-ups, but anything shot at a distance is a pixilated mess.

Martin: Mary, That's what we found as well and it started a conversation about whether it makes sense to use them if students can't produce work at a high enough level.

This is the concern of the video production people (they're across campus in the Communications Department) who were against the Flips from the beginning. They have pushed for the journalism program to require video production

of all journalism majors so that they would get the fundamentals. As the program is now written, all broadcast students get video and the print people have the choice of photojournalism or video (and typically choose photojournalism).

David Weinstock, University of Texas at Tyler: (Regarding Cupito's "pixilated mess" comment) This is a good thing, though. Anyone who teaches photography of videography knows that, left to their own devices, students will back off their subjects as far as they can when shooting. A device like the Flip camera forces students to get up close on their subjects, where the best images are.

Weinstock: (Regarding Martin's

comment about what makes sense)

There was an article in Journalism Educator; I think it was in the fall 2006 issue, or thereabouts, on what kinds of skills we should be teaching students in convergent programs. It involved a nationwide survey of journalism faculty and online, broadcast and print media professionals. The major finding: All majors should be cross-trained in writing and all forms of shooting and editing. Based on what I have learned from the seminars we have run these last few years, what I have read in the literature and what I observe in the media, I believe we should eliminate

"Too many media outlets throw Flip cameras at their reporters and then say, 'See, we're multi-media now.'"

-- Jack Zibluk, Arkansas State

this kind of choice for journalism majors and move toward single-track curriculums in multimedia journalism.

Martin: Definitely easier said than done, given the structural and political issues in many programs. I keep meaning to start collecting any research that has been done on skill levels of students leaving single-track programs. A lot of us will need lots of data just to even begin to be able to have the conversation -- or wait for some retirements.

Mary Alice Basconi, East Tennessee State University: I understand Kodak has a version of the Flip that can be used with an external mic.

Cathy Yungmann, Cabrini

College: The sound issue is why we changed from using Flips to using Kodak Zi8 camcorders several years ago. When we travel overseas or have a last second event to grab, the Kodak fits the bill. (It has) mic input a (and it) records on an SDHC card, which all students have to buy to use in advanced media production classes anyway. Review at:

http://reviews.cnet.com/digital-camcorders/kodak-zi8-pocket-video/4505-6500_7-33740624.html

Zibluk: Vivian, as usual, you have brought up an excellent point, and it's one that the professionals are wrestling with: professional standards and quality. Too many media outlets just throw Flip cameras at their reporters and then say, "See? We're multi-media now." And then the media outlets wonder why there

isn't a jump in viewership when they post poor-quality video. Meanwhile, well shot, well-crafted and edited pieces take shooting and editing time -- and money. Media outlets and clients/customers are very reluctant to pay for high-end, high-cost work when they can get an amateur to throw something together cheap. And what of the audience? To what extent do audience care about the difference between high-end, well-produced work and cell-phone mashups.

Basconi: I would like to see evidence that these clips have a following; from what I hear, they don't get viewed as much as editors think they do.

See **FLIP VIDEO**, page 19

OIL SPILL, from page 3

Castleton State and Terry Dalton of McDaniel College. The session will run from 11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Hammer, who was born in Boston, raised in New Orleans and educated in history at Harvard, has broken a number of stories in the aftermath of the spill. He said British Petroleum cut corners in the run-up to the disaster, including skipping a key test of the well because it was expected to be costly and time-consuming. More recently, he has been examining the impact of the oil-drilling moratorium on Louisiana industry. He reported that Interior Secretary Ken Salazar had implied that a panel of experts had approved of the moratorium -- when in fact

most of them consider it a big mistake.

Hammer has worked for the *Times-Picayune* since late 2006, and before that was a reporter for four years in AP's Washington, D.C., and Little Rock, Ark. bureaus. In 2009, he received the Frank Allen Award from the Associated Press Managing Editors (APME) for the best newspaper writing of the year in Louisiana and Mississippi -- mostly for his coverage of a New Orleans technology office corruption scandal. Two years before, the Louisiana Press Association gave Hammer its top award for his ongoing coverage of Louisiana's signature Katrina recovery program. Hammer's newspaper career began with five years at the Waterbury (Conn.)

Republican-American.

Dietrich, who teaches environmental journalism as a part-time faculty member at Huxley College in Washington, recently compared the Deepwater Horizon and Exxon Valdez tragedies in a lengthy piece for a local weekly paper, listing similarities and differences and discussing the country's insatiable demand for oil.

Salazar, who lives in Colorado, has been invited to represent the federal government on the panel, but his staff said his calendar isn't planned out that far yet. The organizers are hoping for another federal official if he declines.

The "Hot Topics" program is a joint effort of SPIG and the Media Ethics Division of AEJMC.

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recently hunted down the names of past winners of the award, which was first given in 2001, as a way to honor our history. We'll toast Brian Steffen of Simpson College this year. Be sure to check out the ad in the AEJMC program.

Although we've done a good job following through with various proposals and plans, there are things we can do better to make "the SPIG difference" more distinct and meaningful. Membership-building is something to which we need to give more than perfunctory attention. Often, this position is filled at the last minute with a poor soul who agrees after his/her arm gets twisted.

Our membership is slightly under 100, about where it's been for the last few years. This isn't so bad, especially in light of a decrease in multiple memberships within AEJMC (the leadership informed us of this at the December meeting). Nevertheless,

we need to launch a real campaign to tap the many faculty within and outside of AEJMC who work in situations similar to most of us in SPIG. A larger membership would shine more light on the challenges faced by people in this corner of the professoriate.

To attract more members, we need to continue to build on what it is that sets SPIG apart from the other groups within AEJMC. Our efforts to encourage more discussion of pedagogy, more demonstrations of best practices, and more research directly related to journalistic practices and education is the path for this. Members in SPIG teach a lot, and sometimes in our promotion of ourselves as teaching-oriented we may sound as if we are assuming that the fact that we do so much of it automatically means we do it the best.

Yet we all know that one can't do a good job teaching without being up to date on the latest discussions

and controversies in our field. One can't be a good teacher without paying attention to assessment and research; we're always testing and making judgments about what works and doesn't informally, and we need to find ways to make that more explicit and share it. Perhaps the idea for an online journal, which is currently being discussed on the listserv, can help us do that.

What I have learned during my time as a SPIG member, and especially during the last three years, two as co-Vice Head and the last as Head, is that SPIG will find a way to move to the next level when it's time.

SPIG Head Vivian B. Martin, Ph.D., is an associate professor and coordinator of the Journalism Program in Department of English at Central Connecticut State University, 1615 Stanley St., New Britain, CT 06050. She may be reached at (860)832-2776 or by e-mail at martinv@ccsu.edu.

FLIP VIDEO, from page 17

Cathy Yungmann, Cabrini College: I will include how we assess our graduating seniors in their multimedia creation skills during the AEJMC Pre-conference session Best Practices in Convergent Media Education for Small Programs presentation Tuesday, Aug. 3, 1-5 p.m. I think that you're right that it might be hard to encourage multimedia competencies in single-track programs. Even in small communication programs like ours, we need to really push students to create pieces in media other than the one or two to which they're attracted. We prod students through department professional development programs and advising over all four years.

Zibluk: several years ago the University of Kansas eliminated all their tracks and came up with two departments: strategic communications (advertising, PR, etc.) and journalism (broadcast and print journalism.) The idea was to separate departments based on epistemology rather than technology and to provide the cross-training

we're discussing here. While the academic folks liked it, KU did a study of internship sponsors and the internship hosts were disappointed. They found that students weren't as well prepared as before the reorganization. Of course, it's been about five years and a lot has happened since then. Nevertheless, few departments followed Kansas model, and I think that may be because of the reasons Vivian cites: institutional politics.

Donna Harrington-Lueker, Salve Regina University (RI): For those of you who have worked at multimedia in a small program: We've found that if we introduce audio/video editing early in the sequence, basic writing skills simply don't get the attention they need/deserve. (We have students do some very basic shooting and editing to accompany print stories in the lower level classes--then finish with a New Media capstone class in the senior year. I've (mostly) made peace with the idea that the writing/reporting skills will develop over the students' four years in the program (well, three years, really). But I do worry that we may be losing something important (more

important?). Have some of you made adjustments when faced with the same issue?

Martin: Looking forward to your presentation, Cathy. Michael and David were careful about ensuring that the presenters would be able to give us a feel for how the course and practices work holistically--in relation to a curriculum/program--rather than just be one faculty member's gig. I have taught a web course and included blogging since 2001 and incorporate most tools, including audio capture and editing, but it doesn't have the same kind of traction when it is just one faculty member and the others are teaching as if it were 1999. I think we'll all benefit from learning how Cabrini and the other schools put it all together.

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has a plethora of publications in this area of the law.

"In addition to his dossier of materials, Brian Steffen has been a stalwart supporter of SPIG for years," said one of the judges. "He's a tremendous leader in the student media field, and he's a helpful and thoughtful colleague, which his nominators and the judges clearly recognized. This was much deserved."

A colleague said this in nominating Steffen, "Brian's vision for a multi-platform media program

at Simpson and his success in its implementation is the reason that I left a decade-long career as a television news anchor to teach at Simpson. Transitioning to any new career can be a bit bumpy, and at times I have more questions than answers. Brian has helped me with patience and insight. He has challenged me with increasingly difficult assignments, inspiring me to work harder. Consequently, I feel like an important part of a team that is itself growing stronger."

She added, "Brian has a simple and straightforward teaching

philosophy: Students must master journalism fundamentals and then adapt as technology improves our ability to communicate. Under his leadership, our Department of Communication & Media Studies underwent a complete curriculum overhaul between 2008 and 2009.

"Prior to this overhaul, we offered coursework in newspaper writing and marketing and public relations. Today we added courses that teach students videography, Web Journalism 2.0 and even an Integrated Marketing program that works with professional clients."