

spig news

Newsletter of AEJMC's Small Programs Interest Group

Fall 2011

SPIG's new journal debuts this fall

A By Vivian B. Martin
N idea that started as a suggestion over SPIG's listserv will soon make its debut in the world. SPIG will launch *Teaching Journalism and Mass Communication (TJMC)*, an online journal designed to advance research and discussion on pedagogical issues.

Mitzi Lewis, of Midwestern State University, and I spent the past year fleshing out a template and recruiting other SPIG members to

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write, review and copy edit for the premiere issue scheduled to debut this fall. SPIG gave the project its official approval during its business meeting in St. Louis, after Lewis and I presented the proposal. Lewis

outlined our plan to the AEJMC Board of Directors, which gave its blessings to what will be SPIG's most extensive commitment to date.

We have a journal. Its official title and tagline: *Teaching Journalism and Mass Communication, a journal published by the Small Programs Interest Group*. It is a peer-reviewed journal to be published each fall and spring. To make use of the online setting through greater interactivity,

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John McClelland photo

The Hot Topics panel, from left: Josh deBerge, FEMA; Tim Sellnow, Kentucky; Cynthia Nichols, Oklahoma State; Brian Stelter, *The New York Times*, and Stacey Woelfel, Missouri-KOMU-TV.

Hot topic: Using tweets to report on tornadoes

By Michael Longinow

It's not just a phone. It's media. And the little thumb clicks we all see our students doing in class are what might have been the ticket to survival in Joplin and Tuscaloosa after tornadoes ripped open whole

sections of the cities nearly without notice.

Cheryl Bacon's panel on social media brought the practical and the theoretical to the topic of tweets and other types of social media that have become a new reality in

deadline news journalism and crisis communication during natural disasters.

Panelists were Josh DeBerge, Region 7 external affairs officer with the Federal Emergency

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Management Agency (FEMA); Cynthia Nichols, assistant professor in the School of Journalism and Broadcasting at Oklahoma State; Tim Sellnow, associate dean for Graduate Programs at the University of Kentucky, who has written and researched on crisis communications; Brian Stelter, entertainment and digital reporter with The New York Times; and Stacey Woelfel, associate professor at the Missouri School of Journalism and news director of KOMU-TV in Columbia.

Meanwhile, in a time of crisis, phone calls on a landline, and even some cell phone calls can get tricky or impossible. But tweets are not only easier, they are a kind of new approach to news and public relations. Tweets have become part of emergency relief mobilization.

DeBerge said FEMA has earned the trust and respect of residents in crisis by using Facebook as a means of finding out what people want to know. He posts questions and fields them, letting audiences call or tweet him directly.

Yes, there are occasional abuses of the privilege, he said, but the vast majority of the response to a social media openness by FEMA has been positive.

Furthermore, Sellnow's research shows that during a natural disaster or violent political crisis, those in a ravaged area turn to what they know — people who might have a glimpse into what's really going on. And tweets are that connection: not the science, but the sidewalk-level explanation. And they want proof. Pictures and video, even if they are grainy, are what they snap up. In a crisis, tweets from FEMA or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) social media might pre-empt ABC News.

After the tornadoes in Tuscaloosa, social media helped Nichols' students connect with those who knew how to find a blind woman who hadn't eaten in days. Nichols' students were there with supplies in a quickly gathered team relief effort.

Nichols attended Alabama and the devastation in her alma mater's town hit her hard. She and her students took video cameras and got the stories of survival and hope as social service workers, church groups and government agency staff worked together to sort out a crisis in that university community.

"In a time of crisis, phone calls on a landline, and even some cell phone calls, can get tricky or impossible."

Tweets helped Stelter, who was in Chicago to cover Oprah Winfrey when the storms hit Joplin, find sources in the devastated region so he could post a story in a timely manner. But what Stelter found, too, was that people were hungry not just for an 1,100-word story; they wanted updates fast. And the more pictures the better. He was posting constantly. And his tweets were a clipped, up-to-the-minute form of journalism that made life bearable for desperate people huddled in shelters — people hungry for any sense of what was going on.

Stelter tweeted his way to a story about the Joplin devastation and relief work that editors in New York were able to pull together when typical computer connections and phones weren't working. (Stelter noted that as he sat on the panel in St. Louis, there was a New York Times reporter in London using tweets to get a story out about the riots and violence happening in that city.)

It's all new, yet it's old. Telegraph operators were the first to tap-tap paragraph-clipped stories from reporters near Civil War battlefields in this country. Panelists and audience members pointed out that it wasn't that long ago that fedora-wearing reporters in courthouse phone booths hollered stories paragraph by

paragraph through a phone to rewrite staff downtown.

But what about accuracy? A question from the audience challenged the KOMU practice of posting audience tweets on the air during crises to bring constantly updated facts. Social media can turn a region's residents into de-facto stringers, but what if the tweets are inaccurate — or have an agenda?

Woelfel admitted that the speed and volume of tweets makes copy editing difficult or impossible. But he and Stelter pointed out the uncanny ability of the Web to police itself. An erroneous or outrageous tweet will often be found out — and sometimes corrected, multiple times — by tweeters who know the facts.

And, Woelfel added, there are some stories whose magnitude and sensitivity would make the news desk stop and check out a tweet's tip before putting it on the air.

Michael Longinow is a professor of journalism and Journalism Department chair at Biola University, LaMirada, Calif.

Cuillier and Berkey-Gerard win GIFT honors

By Mitzi Lewis

David Cuillier, associate professor of journalism at the University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, and Mark Berkey-Gerard, assistant professor of journalism at Rowan University at Glassboro in Southern New Jersey, shared top honors for the 2011 Great Ideas For Teachers (GIFT) competition.

Cuillier's entry, "Fill 'er up! How to teach data collection, analysis, and visualization through free and easy online mapping of gas prices," teaches students how to "gather data relevant to their lives (such as gas prices), derive story ideas, and post the information online as tables, charts and maps."

Using Google Fusion Tables and Microsoft Excel, students create a database of gas prices they gather from their community and post the data online. Google Fusion Tables functions help students analyze, chart, map and share the data without having to write a computer program.



CUILLIER

Cuillier says that because students are actively involved in gathering the data, they feel more connected to the community and to the assignment. They

also get excited when they see their work visualized publicly in a professional-looking format.

Meanwhile, Berkey-Gerard's entry, "Building Blocks of Multimedia Storytelling: How to Identify and Fashion a Compelling Narrative with Sound and Visuals," offers three simple and easy-to-remember narrative structures for creating multimedia stories. They are: (a) anecdote and moment of reflection; (b) arc of the story, and (c) someone does something because.

Students are given an explanation and examples of each approach, then apply the ideas to their own stories and explain which elements are used. Berkey-Gerard developed this assignment to provide a structure for moving beyond equipment and technical issues to recognizing, reporting and conveying a compelling story, which he says are "critical qualities for a journalist."

As a result, the quality of student work in his class has improved.

Mitzi Lewis is an assistant professor in the Department of Mass Communication at Midwestern State University, Wichita Falls, Texas.



BERKEY-GERARD

Head notes

Many thanks to Mitzi and Vivian

Hello SPIG!

I trust you all enjoyed our productive week in St. Louis. SPIG was well represented by its members in a variety of panels, poster sessions and meetings, and SPIG added several *new* members who already have gotten involved in leadership roles within our group (see the officer list below).

Here are updates on a couple of issues that were resolved on

Saturday in St. Louis:

1. The AEJMC Board of Directors approved moving forward with work on the journal! A big note of thanks goes to Mitzi Lewis, Vivian Martin and Margo Wilson, who have turned an idea into a reality in 12 months. They deserve our heartfelt thanks for the initiative and perseverance they have exemplified for us during the past

See **THANKS**, page 6



SUSAN LEWIS

How blogs and wikis can help you teach online

By Carrie Buchanan

When Doreen Marchionni of Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Wash., first earned her doctorate, she was asked to teach Quantitative Research Methods to graduate students. For the former journalist with a fear of math, this was a daunting challenge. To make it doubly intimidating, the course was entirely online.

"It ended up being one of the more delightful teaching experiences I could have ever had," Marchionni said during the Aug. 10 AEJMC panel "Blogs and Wikis and Blackboard: A Look at Options of On-line Delivery."

She shared three basic lessons learned along the way.

First, when teaching online "you have to overcompensate" for the fact you're not meeting people face to face. Not only do you need to make communication clear, she said, "you have to do it in a variety of ways."

So she used email, social media and the telephone. She had virtual office hours. When students could call or email, she'd be there. And they did call and email.

"As long as there's a sense of a communication safety net, you're OK."

She used Blackboard, which has an audio recording tool. She started each week with a voice memo: a quick summary of the week ahead. In her evaluations, "I was surprised at how many students said, 'I liked the voice memos,'" she added.

Second tip: "Put everything, everything, on your course management site from day one. (It gives students a sense of control to know what's coming.)"

Third, Marchionni said, ask students how you're doing at midterm. Anonymous midterm evaluations on key issues give you a chance to return to concepts they have trouble with.

WIKIS

Mitzi Lewis of Midwestern State recommended

using wikis, which can be used in online courses or regular ones in which students are expected to develop online proficiency.

"Wiki is a Hawaiian term for quick," Lewis said. It's a quick, easy way to get a web page online. It also allows for multiple authors, sharing and collaboration.

There are different types of wikis. Pbwiki, Wikispaces and Wetpaint are for beginners. Some are free. Because wikis can be modified by any user, they become a collaborative class project, but you can keep track of who contributed what. This enhances learning by "putting more of the responsibility of learning explicitly in students' hands," Lewis said.

She recommended having two wikis for each course: one to organize all the course materials and the other for students to use for their projects.

Lewis offers a set of "best practices" plus several sample wikis in her PowerPoint slides, which are online at <http://slidesha.re/qRruy8>.

BLOGS

Toni Albertson of Mt. San Antonio teaches at the largest community college in California and is always looking for the best ways to engage students.

"Our journalism program has become just massive," she said. "So I have had to find ways to connect everyone."

One answer has been blogging, which Albertson called an "incredible experience" that connects everybody within a class. She recommends using WordPress, Blogger or Tumblr, all of which are free, public blogging platforms. The professor starts her own blog and requires students to read and comment on that and set up their own blogs as well.

In her online journalism class, students blog regularly, choosing their own area of expertise and writing about that. At least once a month, they must interview someone. In her introductory journalism classes, Albertson requires only three or four entries, each of which requires some original reporting.

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"Put everything, everything, on your course management site from day one. (It gives students a sense of control to know what's coming.)"

-- Doreen Marchionni

SPIG profile:

Jack Zibluk is a self-taught photojournalist

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

I am a professor of journalism at Arkansas State University, and president of the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Association. My teaching is in photojournalism, photography, visual communications and several other areas. Academically, I am the department's "utility infielder."

Tell me an interesting fact about you.

I have won state and national educator awards for my work in photojournalism, and I have worked with major publications such as National Geographic magazine and Rolling Stone. Yet, I am entirely self-taught. I have never taken a photo course in my life.

What was your first job?

I was co-founder of our independent junior high school newspaper. My co-editor's dad named it "The Luke Hill Worker's Press." I have been involved in journalism ever since.

Tell me about your education.

I grew up in a fairly rural area in Connecticut and went to a fairly wealthy regional high school. I was the [comparatively] poor kid in the [comparatively] rich school. It sucked. My family sent me to the local state university, Southern Connecticut, where I was class president and editor of the student newspaper for two years. It was a formative experience. I have a BS



ZIBLUK

in political science (1983) and an MS in urban studies (1984) with an emphasis in public administration and planning from Southern Connecticut State University.

"I struggled with my dissertation. I needed editing help, and I advertised to find a freelance editor. She did so well, I had to marry her."

What was your dissertation topic and what is your current research focus?

I wanted to study the nexus of the media and policy formation and ended up doing a triple case study on school boards in smallish towns. I found that the newspapers

essentially published whatever the superintendent wanted then to publish, no matter how the dynamics of the situation worked. I submitted various parts of it for publication, but the best I could do was a poster presentation. Having five years of your life on a poster board is a humbling experience.

What do you like about your job and your workplace?

I like my colleagues a lot. In a small or medium-sized school, you get more of a chance to make a difference in the institution than in a larger school.

Tell me something about your personal life.

I struggled with my dissertation. I was ABD and an instructor for five years. I needed editing help, and I advertised in an alternative newspaper to find a freelance editor. She did so well, I had to marry her. We had a late-30s start on a family, and we have one child, Kate, a sixth grader of whom we are very proud. Here is a link to a story about her:

<http://www.arkansas-catholic.org/article.php?id=2144>

What other significant achievements have you had?

I spent a summer working for National Geographic magazine as their faculty fellow in 2002. I was national vice president of the National Press Photographers Association, and I won the association's Garland "Educator of the Year" Award for my work as ethics columnist for

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PROFILE, from page 5

News Photographer magazine in 2006. I write occasionally for the Chronicle of Higher Education and various other publications. Here's a story I wrote for the CHE:

<http://chronicle.com/article/My-PromotionMy-Father/127868/>

Last summer, I organized and led a study-abroad student tour of India.

<http://asuindia2011.blogspot.com/>

What are your personal or professional goals now?

Since my REAL background is in public administration, and I have real-life management experience in a decade-long journalism career, I make no secret that I'd like to get into administration as a chair or

dean.

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

I was SPIG head about six years ago, and I have had various offices in the Viscom and Newspaper divisions. I attended the weeklong AEJMC leadership academy for potential new administrators at Louisiana State University in 2008.

What goal do you have for SPIG?

SPIG should be the tail that wags the AEJMC dog. We are the only ones engaged seriously in the journalism profession and the only ones truly dedicated to teaching. While the journalism world is changing, too many scholars stick their heads in the sands of arcane and obscure research. That is

increasingly hard to defend to a skeptical public in a time of dropping funds and increasing expenses.

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

I prefer not to describe myself, but some of my columns and some of my leadership activities have brought the same comment: People say I have a lot of "intestinal fortitude," but they usually use stronger language.

This SPIG profile was edited by Richard D. Hendrickson, who has been heard bragging that he once shared grad office space with Jack Zibluk at Bowling Green State University.

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year. Mitzi had the opportunity to present the proposal to the board on Saturday, so special thanks to her for that as well. The board had a few suggestions that Mitzi and Vivian are considering and implementing. I expect we will hear more from them in the coming weeks. For now, please join me in congratulating them on a tremendous accomplishment!

2. The Council of Divisions (CoD) approved a measure giving the Great Ideas For Teachers (GIFT) session a special pre-programmed slot on the program grid. The session will continue to be co-sponsored by SPIG and CCJA. This is a great relief to SPIG programmers because GIFT is an important and visible part of our programming. Now it will be preserved as it has been in the past as a stand-alone session with 25 finalists. (You'll recall that this year in a workaround we were half of a co-sponsored

research poster session, which seemed to dilute the essence of the GIFT competition.) The CoD also approved not leaving space for mini-plens in the program grid, although four divisions or interest groups can work together to devise a mini-plen-like session if they want to.

The 2012 Conference is scheduled for Thursday, Aug. 9 to Sunday, Aug. 12 at the Chicago Marriott Downtown. The schedule is a one-day shift from the normal pattern. You will be receiving calls for session proposals soon. Please consider adding your ideas to the mix SPIG will propose this fall. Please note next year's meeting is the 100th anniversary of AEJMC.

I've included the list of new officers for your convenience.

HEAD: Susan Lewis, Abilene Christian

VICE HEADS: Kay Colley, Texas Wesleyan and Michael Longinow, Biola (with David Weinstock for Best Practices Competition)

SECRETARY: Pam Parry, Belmont
RESEARCH: Gail Henson, Bellarmine and Michael Smith, Campbell
TEACHING: Mitzi Lewis, Midwestern State (including Teacher of the Year competition) and David Weinstock, UT-Tyler

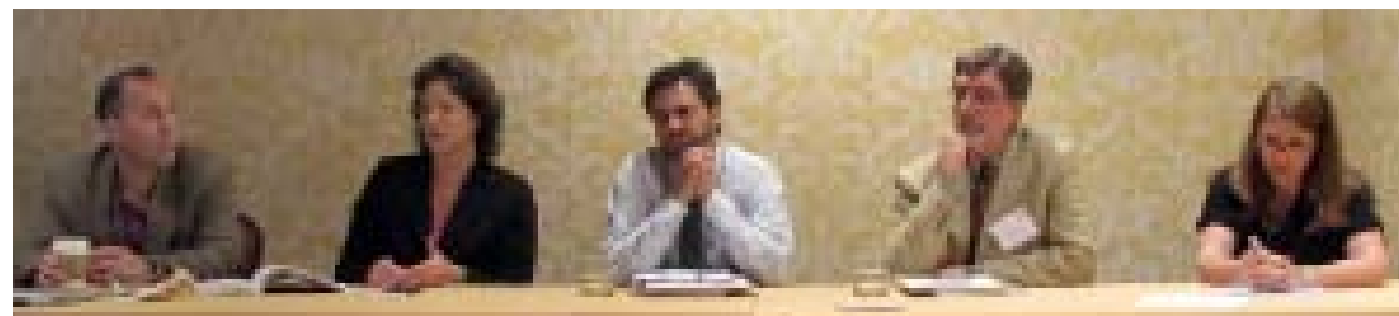
PF&R: Liz Atwood, Hood, and Kenneth Pybus, Abilene Christian
NEWSLETTER: Richard Hendrickson, JCU, and Sandra Combs, A State

WEB SITE: TBA (may be migrated)
LISTSERV: Brian Steffen, Simpson

Thanks for being a member of SPIG. Please invite your colleagues to join us as we Educate, Cultivate and Communicate.

Susan Lewis

Dr. Susan Lewis is an associate professor in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Abilene Christian University. Her e-mail address is lewiss@acu.edu.

If we rebuild programs, will diversity grow?

John McClelland photo

Diversity panel, from left, moderator Michael Longinow, Biola; Kay Colley, Texas Western; David Mindich, St. Michael's; Lee Becker, Georgia, and Tania Cantrell Rosas-Moreno, Loyola (Maryland).

By John McClelland

STUDENTS are coming to, and many are staying in, the programs built by journalism and communication educators. But we have lots of challenges.

That's no surprise to anyone who has been paying attention. Even so, those attending the Small Programs and Community College interest groups' teaching panel at AEJMC in St. Louis got some fresh views.

Moderator Michael Longinow set the tone by saying the session was a response to "the often tough questions students bring, out of skepticism whether they really believe in what they are studying" as valid career preparation.

Kay Colley of Texas Wesleyan, recent winner of a teaching award, told of the challenges she faced arriving at TW four years ago.

At a public-relations mixer, she recalled, "Students proceeded for an hour to tell me why their degrees were useless." (They weren't getting interviews, much less jobs.)

She started a club and found ways for junior faculty to get

SPIG panel

curriculum changes made. It also helped to enlist the dean and an outside consultant, to understand the curriculum process and funding and to choose one or two things to tackle each semester.

David Mindich of St. Michael's said the program was all

"Students proceeded for an hour to tell me why their degrees were useless."

-- Kay Colley

practitioners before curriculum reform. It got stronger, he said, with "a really interesting mix" of "researchers who valued the professionals and practitioners who value research."

Like Ishmael and Queequeg on a monkey rope in "Moby Dick," the two groups saw their fates attached. They were all in the same boat in the stormy waters of being

lumped with a large, dysfunctional, department.

Now in Arts & Sciences, Mindich said, the program stands on a trinity of disciplines: media studies, journalism and digital arts.

Lee Becker of Georgia is no small-programs guy, but his leadership of the annual jobs survey made him a natural to discuss student demographics. The survey goes back to the 1934 Journalism Bulletin, predecessor of JMC Quarterly.

Within his quick review of the massive project and complex data, some details jumped out:

-- Graduate enrollments are up because master's programs tend to be sensitive to the labor

market; when people lose jobs, they try retooling.

-- Nobody knows how many students really are in communication programs. Federal statistical codes show numbers "at least twice what we get."

-- Among specializations, "other" is large and fast-growing.

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we want to keep the conversation going in the months between the release of each new issue. We're planning to update a symposia section with a few essays in the months following the publication of each issue.

Of course, the bigger questions have to do with what is it we're trying to accomplish and, most importantly, how SPIG members can get involved. I want to speak to that here.

Some of us in SPIG have talked a lot about advancing pedagogical scholarship in our field. That's just a fancy way of saying we want greater attention given to research and other types of scholarly articles that examine what we do in the classroom and how we can make it more effective. For those of us with heavy teaching loads, whose universities put much focus on teaching effectiveness, there is a need for more publications and venues for us to do research and write on how and what we teach.

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) has been moving in from the margins of academia, a change spurred in part by the increased emphasis in assessment. In SPIG, research co-chairs, particularly John Jenks when he took on that role after serving as Head, have raised the number and quality of research papers focused on issues ranging from teaching writing to reading enhancement for SPIG's Scholar-to-Scholar sessions at the conferences.

The Scholarship of Application contest, meanwhile, allows people to show how they have integrated their own professional work—journalism articles, public relations

campaigns—into the classroom to teach what they have practiced. Set alongside SPIG's more than 10 years of co-sponsorship of the GIFT program, the research push shows SPIG has been building a niche in which we have been making room for more and creative ways to research and write about teaching journalism and mass communication.

The first issue of *TJMC* will give an idea of some of what we hope to accomplish, but the vision is evolving. The Call for Papers for spring 2012 gives some immediate

“Our content will come from the ground up -- from identified concerns within our small-programs membership.”

ways in which SPIG members can get involved, starting with the Symposia section, which is seeking articles reflecting on assessment.

But I also want to take on a few of the common questions SPIG members and others have about the new publication.

Doesn't Journalism and Mass Communication Educator already cover this area?

JMCE certainly publishes material on teaching. It also publishes material, such as a recent piece on the gender of publication authors, which, while interesting, isn't focused on teaching. This is not a knock on JMCE. A publication can't be everything for everyone; that's why there are usually several magazines and journals in one area. We differ from JMCE in three key ways.

1. Our content will come from the ground up—from identified concerns within our small-programs membership and other scholars with similar teaching interests.

2. We seek practical research on classroom/curriculum issues.

3. We are online, which gives us the opportunity to utilize the web to present our material and to converse about the material. We want multimedia presentations to become routine elements of our journal and we want readers to comment, raise questions, move the conversation forward, and possibly even to initiate collaborations.

What type of content are you looking for?

We have general guidelines, but we don't want people to feel locked into them. We have the chance to re-envision the academic journal, while maintaining quality and peer-review standards.

The Call for Papers gives an idea of the categories, but the area that may stump prospective authors the most are terms like “Scholarship of Application” and “Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.”

SPIG has adopted some aspects of the scholarship of learning for its biennial contest.

SPIG members submit creative work they have published and explain how they brought it into the classroom. Members have shared the anatomy of a New York Times article, as well as the adventures of a motorcycle trek that the professor blogged about from the road. Our journal expands the concept by asking writers to talk about a course or lesson. It need not be based on a freelance adventure; rather, we are looking for a discussion on the

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implementation of the kind of material we're all trying to do. Margo Wilson's reflections on her first time teaching a multimedia course, which integrates her reflections, some literature on the challenges of teaching technology, as well as links to some of the work, is a wonderful example of this genre.

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning can take a few forms. Illinois State University, which has a center around such issues, has called it “systematic learning on teaching and learning made public”

(<http://sotl.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/pdf/definesotl.pdf>). The Carnegie Foundation, sponsor of a large SOTL initiative (<http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/scholarship-teaching-learning>), describes it as posing problems around teaching and learning and pursuing answers through accepted approaches then subject to peer review. SOTL can take many forms, and increasingly it is accepted as worthy (promotable) research when done effectively.

In some instances, SOTL may be the assessment projects faculty do to understand what is going on in their classes; in others it might be a reflection on previously collected findings or research on an issue. Some of the research we see at SPIG's Scholar-2-Scholar exhibitions during the annual conference might fall in this category, other work might not. Often SOTL allows faculty to reflect on their own teaching and students' learning.

I am a little reluctant to state what SOTL is and isn't, because it is involving. It opens the door for interesting methodologies, including action research and projects carried out from a feminist standpoint. Some SPIG members are on campuses where SOTL initiatives are underway and may be engaged

in projects they'd like to share. Others may have ideas they'd like to develop. Please get in touch with me (martinv@ccsu.edu) and Mitzi Lewis (mitzi.lewis@mwsu.edu) to brainstorm.

With this journal SPIG has an opportunity to push discussions of teaching JMC down creative and productive paths. Good pedagogical discussions are difficult to find in the field's journals. We hear a lot about curriculum reform, but not enough about fundamental issues about the learning we are trying to foster. The journal gives us space to reflect on what is special about JMC education and how it fits (or should fit) in education more broadly.

In the case of SPIG members, it allows us to start thinking more systematically about what we do every day and to have an outlet for reflection.

We think *TJMC* can be good for faculty and their students.

Vivian B. Martin is an associate professor/coordinator of the Journalism Program at Central Connecticut State University, Hartford.

Mitzi Lewis is an assistant professor in the Department of Mass Communication at Midwestern State University, Wichita Falls, Texas.

Our online journal needs your help

STAFFING

Promotions manager—We need someone to get the word out about TCJM starting with the fall launch. We want someone who'll have ideas for reaching the JMC community and other possible audiences. If you think you can commit to this through the fall 2012 issue, please contact Mitzi Lewis (mitzi.lewis@mwsu.edu) and Vivian Martin (martinv@ccsu.edu).

Copy editors—Margo Wilson is our ME/Copy Chief, but she wants company. The more copy editors we have, the lighter the load for everyone. Contact Vivian Martin (martinv@ccsu.edu).

Reviewers—We want to assign reviewers based on expertise. We don't want to bog down reviewers with more than one piece per issue, and we want to turn around reviews in 30 days. We need SPIG members to help us meet this standard of academic integrity. Contact Vivian Martin (martinv@ccsu.edu).

CONTENT

1. The Blowing up Journalism 101 symposia has room for a few more essays. Essays can be as short as 500 words, so you can do one. Do you have strong feelings about content that should be dropped from Journalism 101? Do you think the first course should be a principles course rather than writing course? Do you prefer to teach it as a course for non-majors rather than School bootcamp? Are you introducing something this fall that you might write about and update later? (Remember: the symposia will add some essays in the immediate months following publication.) Please contact Vivian Martin (martinv@ccsu.edu).

2. Reviews: We're looking for reviews of relevant books, films, video games, Web resources and other materials. We want to make full use of the Web, so reviews of an individual online tool or even a theme piece comparing tools are welcome. Contact Vivian Martin (martinv@ccsu.edu).

Successful small steps to teaching big sections

By Michael Longinow

Ten students or 100 students is all about the same thing — personal connection in the teaching process. And with students, it's mostly about perception.

Smart teachers can figure out ways of making every class member sense they're getting personal attention in the conveying of new ideas, the evaluation of work, even the grading of assignments. If the professor is there for them, they'll show up — mentally and physically.

Is it possible? And if so, how?

Susan Lewis of Abilene Christian University (Texas) told panelists and audience members in St. Louis that the answer is multi-layered. Faculty need creativity, flexibility, technological innovation, and must be vigilant to the group chemistry and dynamics of a big class.

Students are not merely a "sea of faces" as the title of Lewis' panel suggests. They're individuals. And each one wants the sense that the professor knows they're there.

So, Lewis said, name memorization has to happen. The professor teaching a big class has to be able to call on students by name — engaging them at a personal level.

Students in big classes sometimes enjoy the anonymity. They'd rather not engage others. But Lewis said that when a persistent teacher guides them, getting students to respond with their name before answering, connections can happen.

Teaching panel

Blogs as a group interaction can help with this, she said — all the better when students are required to put their picture alongside their comments.

And assignments — even quick, electronic ones — can be a professor's friend when taking attendance. Boredom will kill a large class. And droning through an alphabetical list each class is hard to beat as a boredom creator.

Faculty members are not paid

"Assignments -- even quick, electronic ones -- can be the professor's friend when taking attendance."

-- Susan Lewis

to be entertainers. But they are paid to be innovative in how they take concepts and get them across to students. That takes familiarity with the subject and class-by-class material, Lewis said.

But it also takes sensitivity to each day's group dynamic in a class. If one day is filled with individuals calling attention to themselves in distracting ways, material sometimes has to take a backseat to take control of the moment — while maintaining a hand in the learning that needs to happen.

Control of the teaching moment is crucial to any classroom, small

or large.

Group psychology (and classroom behavior research) suggests that when students come into a crowded classroom, they act differently than in a smaller one (see Jones and Jones, "Comprehensive Classroom Management: Creative Positive Learning Environments," 2nd ed., Allyn & Bacon). Individuals who seem docile and passive may erupt in interesting ways when part of a group that's hidden away in the corner of a big lecture hall.

Group behavior makes distracting behaviors louder and more difficult to control.

So Lewis said rules about texting and electronic multi-tasking have to be made clear right up front in a given quarter or semester. Each faculty member has to decide what those will be, but the key is to avoid letting distraction ruin a lecture, class discussion

or group experience. Sometimes the distraction is not electronic. It's just student obstinance and a mind to do something else with others while class is going on.

There are times, she noted, when the old fashioned "you're out" approach has to happen. When a student is asked to leave — a kind of social-experience death penalty — particularly if it was clear that the student had it coming, the result is a freer and more cooperative class.

Lewis noted that learning with this generation happens in 10 to 20 minute intervals. To assume they'll

See **BIG SECTIONS**, page 12

Facing assessment? Hear these voices of experience

By Kay Colley

Planning assessment just got easier if you follow the advice of faculty members from the AEJMC panel "Acing Assessment: How to Measure, Document, and Improve Student Achievement of Learning Outcomes."

A panel of small and large program participants gave about 20 attendees their best practices in creating assessment programs, starting and ending with the idea that assessment has a purpose.

"It's important to remember that the entire purpose of outcomes assessment is to improve the curriculum," said Dr. Tom Weir, associate professor of advertising and public relations at the University of South Carolina's School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

When several of the panel members began creating their assessment programs, they looked to guidelines or experts to help.

Dr. Gail Henson, professor and chair at Bellarmine University School of Communication, said the AEJMC criteria helped guide Bellarmine's assessment of student learning outcomes. The school also sought the help of assessment experts from the education department and Bellarmine also hosted a one-day retreat focused on assessment.

"That one day retreat was singlehandedly the best thing we did," she said.

In planning assessment, Bellarmine faculty clarified the unit mission statement and established program learning goals. Then they determined a process of developing the plan.

Conference panel

Finally, they created an assessment matrix to put the data in one document.

"That was really important," Henson said. "That helps you tidy up."

Dr. Sandy Utt, associate professor in the Department of Journalism in the College of Communication and Fine Arts at the University of Memphis, also advocated the use of currently available outcomes. For her department, it was the core values

"It's important to remember that the entire purpose of assessment is to improve the curriculum."

-- Tom Weir

and competencies from ACEJMC that helped them.

"I'm a firm believer in not reinventing the wheel," Utt said. "Take what you've got, and use what you already have. Yes, it can be cumbersome, if you make it cumbersome. Yes, it can be difficult, if you make it difficult."

Utt recommended a multi-step process for creating an assessment plan, using some of the assessment criteria already in place.

"Look at the ACEJMC core values and competencies and take the ones that work for you," Utt said. "Write the student outcomes. Take what you're already doing and make it work

for you. Use rubrics or a matrix for assessment. Set criteria for success. What do you do with those who fall below? Articulate in some way, then measure again."

While putting together a complete assessment plan can seem overwhelming, Utt said the key is to take the entire plan and break it into smaller pieces.

"This can be overwhelming if you try to do it all at one time," Utt said. "Add as you go along."

Panelists stressed the importance of making assessment part of a program and part of each class within the program, creating a unified and faculty-driven assessment process.

"The faculty have to buy into this," Weir said. "Assessment of learning outcomes is a moving target. It's constantly changing. The critical part in understanding the process is beginning with understanding learning outcomes. They have to

come from faculty and be publicized like crazy. Posters in hall, on syllabus, in classrooms. They have to be visible. Students have to know. Faculty has to know."

Some of the techniques that panelists have used in assessing learning outcomes are: having advisory board members review a random sample of student writing, using a pretest and posttest on all courses, implementing an entry exam for the program, creating a required capstone course, embedding learning outcomes test questions into each course and surveying graduates. Grades are not used in assessment plans.

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DIVERSITY, from page 7

-- The students are 64 percent women now, and "fields that attract women grow," but can become too short of men.

-- Programs said 81 percent had made some recent curriculum modification, mostly adding to digital-competence work. The biggest challenges? Financial.

The full survey results are online at <http://www.grady.uga.edu/annualsurveys/>.

Tania Cantrell Rosas-Moreno of Loyola (Maryland) recounted rapid growth in minority media and audiences, especially Asian and Hispanic-Latino. She asked, "Who is training our students to use ethnic media? And who is being prepared to do that training?"

"Taking care of those new professors" will be crucial to building and maintaining diversity of faculties and student bodies, she said.

Becker said the study found few potential Ph.D. hires who were not either foreign or Caucasian.

Colley added, "It's really a pipeline issue. Yes, the population is growing, but we're not educating Latinos to the level [needed]."

Rosas-Moreno said the goal of getting new undergraduate students to the doctoral-professorial level would be a 10-year process. He cited an extensive study, and recommended <http://newamericamedia.org/>.

Audience members, including Vivian Martin of Central Connecticut and Rose Kundanis of

Keene State (N.H.), commented on the difficulties of retaining urban or under-prepared students.

Becker reinforced this when he said, "When you lose students, they tend to be the ones you most need," such as men in public relations and advertising, and ethnic minorities or the disadvantaged overall. Percentages of enrollments of African ancestry in recent years fell from 14 to 9 and Hispanic from 10.4 to 7.

Finally, Longinow encouraged participants, even those who are not [yet] SPIG members, to ask Brian Steffen to add them to the listserv by emailing him at brian.steffen@simpson.edu.

John McClelland is an associate professor emeritus of journalism in the Department of Communication at Roosevelt University in Chicago.

ASSESSMENT, from page 11

"Grades are not good measures," Weir said because assessment is programmatic and grades are negotiation between individuals.

Nevertheless, there are other ways of assessing programmatic outcomes.

Dr. Mary Jean Land, professor and department chair of the Department of Communication at Georgia College, said the key is to embrace the ability to determine your own measures.

"We have the freedom to determine measurements," Land said. "We do it ourselves."

Audience member, Vivian Martin, associate professor at Central Connecticut State University and former SPIG head, said knowing program learning outcomes helps guide her courses, improving program outcomes.

However, some audience members expressed concern about the tendency to teach to the test, especially if programmatic outcomes are so clear.

Finally, Weir reminded the audience that purpose of program assessment was to improve the curriculum and thus the overall performance of students as they embark on communication careers.

"If it's not working to improve the curriculum, it's not working," he said.

Kay Colley is student media director and assistant professor at Texas Wesleyan University.

BIG SECTIONS, from page 10

stick with a lecture, a group exercise, even a writing task for 30, 40 or 60 minutes is to ignore most research out there on student engagement.

So smart faculty in big classes learn to change it up. They insert learning activities spontaneously when the classroom mood is getting flat.

Lewis reminded everyone that boredom in a classroom sometimes begins at the podium. Faculty members need to be excited about what they're teaching or the teaching won't fly.

And how to grade all those student papers?

"Strategically," Lewis said.

Assessment can be staggered over the semester in ways that allow the professor to cope.

No teaching assistants (or few)? Keep papers and projects short. Make them electronic and have students post them in an online drop box for quick turnaround. Grade quizzes in class (remember the attendance accountability value?)

And don't let them see you sweat, Lewis said. When you're all good, so are they.

Michael Longinow is a professor of journalism and Journalism Department Chair at Biola University, LaMirada, Calif.

Annenberg professors highlight research and practice

By Sandra L. Combs

Three University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism professors showed attendees why they are award-winning professionals, during the USC Research and Practice Presentation Friday morning in St. Louis.

First, was professor of journalism Felix Gutierrez, who presented "Voices for Justice: 200 Years of Latino Newspapers in the United States." DVDs were distributed after Gutierrez's presentation that included stories, pictures and headlines "chronicling issues covered by U.S. Latino newspapers since 1808 and the journalists who covered them."

"We may be new to you but we are not new to journalism," Gutierrez said when giving a brief history of the Latino press.

The former full time journalist said it wasn't easy for him to get a job at a daily newspaper after he graduated from college and was happy there were other newspapers out there.

"I had a master's degree from Medill in the 1960s but couldn't get a job at a mainstream newspaper," Gutierrez said. "I went to work for an alternative newspaper."

Meanwhile, the second

presenter, Joe Saltzman, professor of journalism, said movies and television shows seem to be the main sources for ideas about what real journalists are like.

In movies like: "Back in Circulation," "Deadline USA," "Broadcast News," "Good Night, Good Luck," and "Our Gang: Going to Press," Saltzman said the journalists were the central characters with flaws and heroics. Television shows like: "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," "Murphy Brown," and "Lou Grant" helped shape "The Image of the

"Movies and television shows seem to be the main sources for ideas about what real journalists are like."

Journalist in Popular Culture."

"Most people get their ideas about journalists from popular culture," said Saltzman about a study he actually started about 25 years ago. The last 11 years he has conducted the journalists' image study at USC. He calls this research area "a thriving new academic field."

Finally, the third presenter introduced 2-year-old Neon Tommy

to the group.

Marc Cooper, associate professor and Director of Annenberg Digital News, said the 24-7 online news source was a different approach that has pushed them to being one of the most read online university publications with about 3 million page views during the academic year. He said they usually have 25-30 pieces of content per day in the "student edited and checked by adults" publication.

"We are competing against mainstream media," Cooper said. "We do what we do best and link to the rest. We do original news reporting, blogging, opinion, international and national news."

For example, Cooper said when President Barack Obama visited USC, www.neontommy.com posted 40 pieces of original content about the visit within eight hours, and on the night of the Oscars, 36 stories were published on the site.

Meanwhile, Geneva Overholser, USC Annenberg School of Journalism director, said getting out that trio of research information beats having a cocktail reception any day.

Sandra L. Combs is an assistant professor in the Department of Journalism at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro.

GIFT survives the demise of AEJMC's 'mini-plens'

A mini-plen is a cousin to a plenary session that the whole conference would attend. Four mini-plens used to be scheduled all at one time slot on the schedule, so that a minimum number of sessions were scheduled against them and ideally a large crowd would attend each of the four.

Recently attendance at many mini-plens, except "Great Ideas for Teachers" (GIFT), had dwindled, so many divisions and interest groups agreed that they were a waste of a prime session slot.

But GIFT remains popular, so the Council of Divisions voted to protect it by making it "pre-programmed," which means that GIFT will be on the programming grid prior to the chip auction. It shouldn't affect the pre-conference session.

-- Susan Lewis

Projects bring the world to the classroom

By Carrie Buchanan

A “collaborative classroom” is one that brings the outside world in and, in many cases, sends students out, drawing upon alumni and community resources. Sometimes those resources are other departments in the university; sometimes they are local businesses or professionals.

An early Thursday morning panel at this year’s AEJMC conference drew a roomful of educators interested in bringing this concept to life.

Four distinctly different projects were presented, including:

-- a magazine published by journalism majors in a capstone course with help from marketing students, alumni and a local corporation;

-- a freshman seminar that pulled in upperclassmen and faculty from various departments and sent students out to do service in the community;

-- a project that designed an iPad app for student publications, drawing together faculty and students from journalism, art and design, and information technology and computing; and

-- a five-week backpack journalism course that included a trip to Uganda to document, in blogs, stories and film, the lives of people there.

The magazine project, presented by Jill Van Wyke of Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, was a collaboration between magazine and marketing students with alumni and other professionals working in photography, graphic design and publishing. Locally-based Meredith Corporation provided funding to print the publication.

The students learned about

Teaching panel

hiring, contracts, payments and deadlines, Van Wyke said. They were responsible for hiring community photographers, selecting a printer – including getting bids, visiting several printers and defending their selection -- plus working with web and app developers, and selling advertising to local businesses.

The freshman seminar, taught by Brian Steffen of Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa, was titled “Prologue to a Farce: American Journalism and Democracy.” It focused on the book with that title by Mark Lloyd.

The point, Steffen said, was to “create a writing, thinking-intensive atmosphere for our students, most of whom find the jump from high school to college daunting and the expectations of their performance demanding.” Two senior students were teaching assistants and the class worked closely with the university’s writing center and service learning program.

“Being part of the community is part of the objectives,” Steffen said about the course that required collaboration across disciplines among faculty, staff and students. “The message: ‘You can’t make it through college by yourself.’”

Meanwhile, the iPad app was designed by a team of eight faculty and students at Abilene Christian University in Abilene, Texas, during the two weeks between the announcement of the iPad’s imminent release and its actual release. Two journalism professors, Ken Pybus and Susan Lewis, plus one professor each from Art and Design and the iSchool (Information

Technology and Computing), worked with four students on the project.

“We wanted to make it a student-driven project,” said Pybus, who was on the panel with Lewis. Faculty was there to help. The students brought differing skills, plus ideas on how they wanted the app to work that were drawn in part from videos put out by Sports Illustrated and Wired Magazine in anticipation of the iPad.

“Nobody had an iPad at that point,” Pybus noted, because it had not been released yet. “The university was very, very happy with us for doing this. The collaboration was probably the best thing.”

Finally the backpack journalism project in Uganda brought together three departments at Creighton University, a Jesuit college in Omaha, Neb. Carol Zuegner, who made the presentation, said the course was designed by a theology professor, a design and new media professor and a journalism professor intent on “telling stories that aren’t being told, journalists as bearing witness, and the Jesuit concept of men and women for and with others, being present with the poor.”

The course ran for five weeks during the summer and earned students credits in journalism and theology, as well as a special writing credit. The first year, nine students, three faculty and a translator went to the Dominican Republic. The students blogged about their experiences during the trip, wrote stories and produced a 12-minute documentary that was entered in a film festival.

This past summer, they went to Uganda with 13 students plus a student director, three faculty and a Uganda “fixer” who arranged

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SPIG Business meeting

Thursday, Aug. 11 @ 6:45 p.m. -- St. Louis, MO

1. Welcome and Introductions – Ginger Carter Miller, SPIG 2010-11 Head, welcomed 34 members of the organization, who each went around the room and introduced themselves. Several new members attended the business meeting for the first time.

2. Discussion of Membership Recruitment Needs – Ginger Carter Miller said she worked on membership and branding issues, seeking input from the membership on recruitment and organizational identity. She utilized her students

to develop a new SPIG logo, which emphasizes the acronym SPIG in the design and contains the tagline, “Educate, Cultivate, Communicate.” The logo colors are burgundy and gold.

Jack Zibluk offered a motion to accept the logo Ginger presented as the official SPIG logo. Donna Bertazzoni seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Ginger Carter Miller also reported a successful GIFT competition and

thanked the judges.

3. Discussion of Journal, Blog, Wiki – Vivian Martin and Mitzi Lewis led a discussion on a new online journal, while Margo Wilson discussed the SPIG blog and Wiki.

A prototype of the journal, titled *Teaching Journalism and Mass Communication*, is being developed and can be viewed at www.mitzilewis.org/journal. It is designed as “a peer-reviewed open-source online journal

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PROJECTS, from page 13

things for them in that country. They produced a 22-minute film.

“Our students were changed when they came back; very much changed when they came back,” Zuegner said.

One student commented, “I never thought I would be so uncomfortable with being comfortable.”

Carrie Buchanan is Assistant Professor in the Tim Russert Department of Communication and Theatre Arts at John Carroll University.

spig news is edited by Dr. Richard Hendrickson, a Los Angeles-based associate professor for Cleveland’s *John Carroll University*, and Ms. Sandra L. Combs, an assistant professor at *Arkansas State University*, Jonesboro. You may call Dr. Hendrickson at 323-806-1427, or send e-mail to news-prof@me.com. Dr. Combs’ e-mail address is scombs@astate.edu.

Special thanks go out to John McClelland, associate professor emeritus of journalism in the Department of Communication at *Roosevelt University in Chicago*, for contributing photography for this edition, and to all the SPIG members whose bylines are on the stories.

ONLINE, from page 7

She listed many benefits. Blogging keeps students informed because they enjoy checking the professor’s blog and commenting on it. You can use it to cover issues you don’t have time to discuss in class. And the blog makes it easy to link to current stories as examples of the ideas you’re talking about.

Commenting on a blog “opens a door to students who aren’t comfortable speaking up in class,” Albertson said. The shyest students will participate. This promotes great discussions.

DISCUSSIONS

John Kerezy, from Cuyahoga Community College in Ohio, has been teaching online since 2005. He uses Blackboard and other tools to keep things humming because Blackboard helps students to stay organized and on track. For example, Blackboard’s sign-in page lets them know what assignments are due each week.

“I love discussion boards,” he added. In online courses, this provides a place for the class to get together virtually.

Kerezy also said he posts lectures as podcasts. Videos and images are also simple to integrate into Blackboard.

Finally, Kerezy said, “The easiest thing to do is sign up for an online class,” he said. “The hardest is to actually stick to it and finish.”

Carrie Buchanan is an assistant professor in the Tim Russert Department of Communication and Theatre Arts at John Carroll University, University Heights, Ohio.

MINUTES, from page 15 focused on teaching journalism and mass communication in small departments and dedicated to the open exchange of information,” according to a proposal distributed at the meeting. They proposed Fall 2011 as the launch date for the SPIG journal, with two co-editors working with editorial and technological tasks, respectively, and the SPIG Head serving as an Editor at Large. Other volunteer editors would include a managing editor, copy editor, reviews editor, and Webmaster. It also was proposed that Vivian Martin and Mitzi Lewis serve as editors while an Editorial Advisory Board is assembled and the SPIG Executive Board can select Co-Editors. The journal will be published in a “staggered” schedule, meaning an issue would be published in the fall and then articles would be added to it in-between the next issue in the spring. (The complete journal proposal is included as an attachment to the minutes.)

David Weinstock moved and Margo Wilson seconded the motion that the proposal be adopted as presented. The motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

Margo Wilson also reported efforts at piloting a blog in the past year. Margo Wilson, Pat Miller, Ann Colbert and Carrie Buchanan have contributed to the blog during the past year. Kim Pearson also edited policy statements for implementing the blog. While the membership was appreciative of those efforts, they indicated that members did not believe they could support both a journal and a blog in the next few years. So, they discussed the wisdom of supporting one initiative well, rather than struggling to support two outlets.

Susan Lewis moved the blog be dissolved, and Jim Simon amended the motion to include gratitude for Margo Wilson’s efforts in spearheading the blog and then

seconded the motion. It passed unanimously on voice vote.

4. Other new business:

a. ELECTION OF 2011-2012

Officers Brian Steffen moved the election of Susan Lewis, Abilene Christian University, as the incoming Head. Vivian Martin seconded, and the membership unanimously approved her election with a voice vote.

Cheryl Bacon moved and Ginger Carter Miller seconded the additional slate of officers as presented to the membership. The voice vote was unanimous for the slate. Additionally, Ginger Carter Miller recommended the incoming Head consider appointing a Social Media Chair, and the membership concurred. After the meeting, she appointed such a chair. The other officers for 2011-2012 include:

VICE HEADS: Kay Colley, Texas Wesleyan; Michael Longinow, Biola (with D. Weinstock for Best Practices Competition)

SECRETARY: Pam Parry, Belmont
RESEARCH: Gail Henson, Bellarmine, and Michael Smith, Campbell

TEACHING: Mitzi Lewis, Midwestern State (including TOY competition), and David Weinstock, UT-Tyler

PF&R: Liz Atwood, Hood, and Kenneth Pybus, Abilene Christian
NEWSLETTER: Richard Hendrickson, JCU, and Sandra Combs, A State

WEB SITE: TBA (may be migrated

LISTSERV: Brian Steffen, Simpson
MEMBERSHIP: Cindy Simoneau,

Southern Connecticut State
SOCIAL MEDIA: Steve Hill, University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point

GIFT Liaison: Ginger Carter Miller, Georgia College & State

HOT TOPICS Liaison: John Jenks, Dominican

COMMISSION ON STATUS OF WOMEN: Sandra Combs, A State
COMMISSION ON STATUS OF

MINORITIES: Lona Cobb, Winston-Salem State

b. SPIG goals for 2011-12 -- Susan Lewis, newly elected SPIG Head, outlined her five primary goals for the upcoming year:

(1) Continue the trend of partnering with divisions for panels that are relevant to our mission. (This year the organization partnered with MED, MAC, ADV, MAG and CCJA to great effect.)

(2) Continue growth in the research competition.

(3) Engage members and continue to add members.

(4) Promote the listserv/journal to AEJMC.

(5) Special AEJMC 100th anniversary Hot Topics for next year’s convention – What should we do to celebrate the anniversary?

c. HQ report: Susan Lewis also offered a report:

1. Our status as an Interest Group was reaffirmed this year.

2. The Council of Divisions is going to discuss keeping mini-plens on the table for next year.

3. Four cities are being proposed as possible locations for AEJMC’s meeting in 2015, including Palm Springs resort (\$129); Las Vegas Strip (\$119-139); San Diego: downtown (\$195), Mission Bay (\$179) or Mission Valley (\$172), and San Francisco (\$194).

The membership voted with a show of hands, and the vote was tied between San Diego and San Francisco, and Susan Lewis cast the deciding vote to recommend San Francisco.

5. Cheryl Bacon offered a motion for adjournment, and several members seconded. Susan Lewis adjourned the meeting and invited everyone to the SPIG Social at Rosalita’s Cantina, 1235 Washington Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri.

Minutes submitted by Pam Perry, Belmont University, Aug. 15, 2011.