

Renewal Petition
for
Participatory Journalism Interest Group

Submitted
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to the

Association for Education in Journalism
and Mass Communication

by

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To: AEJMC Executive Staff and Board of Directors

Please accept the following as a formal petition for a three-year renewal of the Participatory Journalism Interest Group. In response to the requirements, please find the following included in the petition:

- A formal statement of the mission and goals of the group;
- A list of current and incoming officers;
- Specific list of what this group has accomplished in its most recent three years;
- Why this group fills a unique niche within AEJMC; and
- Copies of the annual reports for the past two years.

Best,

Melissa Tully
PJIG Head, 2013–2014

PART 1: Mission and goals of the group

The Participatory Journalism Interest Group's mission and goals have evolved since our last renewal, as evidenced by our recent name change. The research and teaching interests of PJIG members have changed with newer developments in "citizen-based participatory journalism," as such the group's mission is undergoing a revision. The current mission statement (included below) does not reflect the current state of the group; therefore, PJIG members will vote on a new mission statement (also included below) at the 2014 members' meeting.

Current mission:

The Civic and Citizen Journalism Interest Group [now Participatory Journalism Interest Group] of AEJMC is a group of teachers, scholars, professionals and students who are dedicated to the advancement of journalism that promotes civic and citizen engagement, and research and teaching about these traditions. It is rooted in the traditions of civic or public journalism as developed in the 1990s and has expanded to encompass participatory, audience-involved practices of journalism. The purpose of the Civic and Citizen Journalism Interest Group is to promote and enhance the teaching of such journalism; support and critique of research related to it; and to nurture and expand the discipline of civic and citizen journalism education and scholarship.

Proposed new mission:

The Participatory Journalism Interest Group of AEJMC is a group of teachers, scholars, professionals and students who are dedicated to the advancement of journalism that promotes civic and citizen engagement, and research and teaching about these phenomena. It is rooted in the traditions of civic and citizen journalism developed in the 1990s and has expanded to encompass a broader range of participatory journalism practices, including emerging forms of citizen journalism, blogging and social media, hyper-local media, and audience contributions to mainstream news media. The purpose of the Participatory Interest Group is to promote and enhance the teaching of such journalism; support and critique of research related to it; and to nurture and expand the discipline of participatory journalism education and scholarship.

The PJIG aims to be on the cutting-edge of teaching, research, and collaboration with professionals concerned with the array of activities that fall under the participatory journalism umbrella. The new mission statement reflects the group's goals and interests and should serve the PJIG well in the years to come.

PART 2: Officers

Current Officers (2013–2014):

Head

Melissa Tully, University of Iowa

Co-Vice Heads/Programming

Glenn Scott, Elon University

Seth Lewis, University of Minnesota

Secretary

Mark Poepsel, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville

PF&R Committee Chair

Avery Holton, University of Utah

Research Committee Chair

Liz Viall, Eastern Illinois University

Teaching Committee Co-Chairs

Mary Lou Nemanic, Pennsylvania State University-Altoona

Anne Hoag, Penn State University

Communications Chair (replaced Newsletter Editor)

Jeremy Littau, Lehigh University

Webmaster

Jeff South, Virginia Commonwealth University

Graduate Student Liaison

Mark Coddington, University of Texas-Austin

Candidate slate for incoming officers, 2014–2015

Head

Glenn Scott, Elon University

Co-Vice Heads/Programming

Liz Viall, Eastern Illinois University

Avery Holton, University of Utah

Secretary

Mark Poepsel, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville

PF&R Chair

TBD

Research Chair

TBD

Teaching Committee Co-Chairs

Mary Lou Nemanic, Pennsylvania State University-Altoona

Anne Hoag, Penn State University

Communications Chair

TBD

Webmaster

Jeff South, Virginia Commonwealth University

Graduate Student Liaison

Mark Coddington, University of Texas

PART 3: Specific accomplishments of group in the past three years

Participatory media is a fast-growing area in our field and for PJIG to remain at the forefront of this areas means having members and leaders who work together to make sure that the group's name, mission, communications, and call for papers reflect this progression. Our name change is but one step in this process and reflects the evolution of the group's mission and goals. The new name was a few years in the making with lively discussion at members' meetings and surveys of interest group members informing the decision. The rationale for changing the group's name from Civic and Citizen Journalism Interest Group to Participatory Journalism Interest Group is rooted in the ever-changing nature of the phenomena that interest group remembers and drive their teaching and research. In short, Participatory Journalism better captures the interests of the group's members and the types of teaching, research, and PF&R submissions the group received in the past few years. In short, "Civic and Citizen" no longer reflected the group and its members so, with member support, the group changed its name. Over the past three years, including 2014, the group's membership numbers have remained relatively stable (2012: 98; 2013: 102; 2014: 91). Increasing membership continues to be a goal of the group.

The past three years have seen diverse and high-quality of panel and paper submissions for the annual convention. PJIG has partnered with a number of divisions and interest groups at AJEMC: Scholastic Journalism, Community Journalism, Visual Communication, Law and Policy, Communication Technology, Newspaper and Online News, Small Programs, and Mass Communication and Society to co-sponsor panels and has programmed a full slate of refereed research paper sessions as well. PJIG has also worked with the Council of Affiliates and the Community College Journalism Association to co-sponsor luncheons and sessions.

With the money saved from no longer traveling to the annual chip auction, PJIG has created new cash awards: a second-place student paper award (\$75) and a top poster award (\$100). These new awards are in addition to our top paper and top student paper awards. These awards should attract high-quality submissions and allow the group to recognize outstanding research. The poster award is exciting as it reinforces the idea that poster sessions are not "less than" research paper sessions. PJIG is awarding these new awards for the first time at the 2014 conference in Montreal.

The group maintains an active listserv, hosts a website and a blog, and maintains a Facebook and Twitter presence to keep members and other interested parties up to date on its activities. The group's social media presence has grown in the past two years with Facebook proving to be a valuable asset to the group's communication allowing officers to communicate with members and providing a space for comments and discussions. The group's Facebook page was a lively discussion space during the name-change conversation with officers and members sharing their views on the new name and offering suggestions for the name. The group continues to develop its online presence and has developed a Communications Chair (replacing the Newsletter Editor position) to oversee the groups' various communication channels.

PART 4: Statement of unique purpose

The Participatory Journalism Interest Group's unique purpose is its focus on audience-centered journalism that promotes civic and citizen engagement in service of democracy. PJIG promotes and highlights teaching, research, and PF&R activities that address issues related to citizen engagement with news and journalism that ranges from traditional mainstream journalism to hyper-local news content supported by a neighborhood association. As the group's new name suggests, the group's focus has evolved but it is still rooted in the traditions of civic and citizen journalism.

One of the strengths of the PJIG is its focus on "the people": audiences and contributors to the wide-range of content that falls under contemporary news and journalism practice. Although other divisions and interest groups share some of the same foci as PJIG – for example, the Communication Technology Division's interest in social media and technology-enabled journalism – PJIG remains focused on, as Jay Rosen, put it "the people formally known as the audience." The means and ends of producing journalism continue to evolve, as such, so does the PJIG's interest and focus areas but civic and citizen engagement continue to remain at the core of the group.

Although some things have changed since our previous renewal, at the group's core remains a commitment to audiences' voices and citizens' contributions to journalism. As indicated in the group's 2011 renewal:

... the centrality of the role of the audience as agents of communication and sources of information that facilitate citizen engagement in a democratic society. The roles of citizens as participants and as active agents of change and progress are significant to the [group], and the present media climate possesses interactive tools to make this not just a possibility but a reality. News audiences can imbed their voices and make their mark as informational agents to carry out discussions that impact their communities and society.

The Participatory Journalism Interest Group continues to fulfill a unique niche within AEJMC and will strive to remain the home of important research, developments in teaching participatory journalism, and conversations with professionals navigating the ever-changing world of journalism.

PART 5: Copies of Annual Reports

2012 and 2013 annual reports attached.

2014 annual reported submitted to AEJMC in June 2014.