



## Call for Proposals for ICIG Panels at AEJMC 2016 in Minneapolis, MN.

### Call for Proposals!

**Deadline:** Please email proposals by **October 1, 2016** to:  
Erica Clarke, Director of Career Services/Instructor of  
Communication  
The Pennsylvania State University, Greater Allegheny  
Vice Head of ICIG [eec16@psu.edu](mailto:eec16@psu.edu)

Hello ICIG members,

Welcome to a new year! It was a great pleasure to connect with so many of you in San Francisco in August. We had some extremely successful panels and paper presentations and sparked great discussion among so many about the key concerns of internships among undergraduate students. We were also very happy to enjoy some of the highest attendance at our presentations for the past few years! Now it is time to plan for the AEJMC 2016 Conference in Minneapolis, MN!

The officers of ICIG are seeking suggestions for joint-panels in the areas of Professional Freedom & Responsibility (PF&R) and Teaching. We are particularly interested in joint-panels that span divisions, as co-sponsored panels are the norm, and the more mutual interest a panel drives in a co-sponsoring division, the more likely it is to be scheduled. With this in mind, please consider focusing your ideas on either or both of the ICIG interests – Internships and/or Careers.

We can't guarantee that every panel idea will ultimately be adopted, but sending your ideas along will definitely help in putting together a roster of joint-panels that reflects the interests and strengths of our Interest Group with those of other IGs and Divisions.

During this year's conference we were able to begin discussions with other divisions about co-sponsoring pre-conferences as well as panel discussions on the following topics:

- **PRE-CONFERENCE (hosted by ICIG) – NUTS AND BOLTS OF DEVELOPING A SUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM.** If you have resources that you would like to share for the participant packet (contracts, timesheets, PPTs, etc) or if you would like to serve as a panel speaker, please let Erica know.
- **PRE-CONFERENCE (co-hosted by ICIG and CCS) – CRITICAL REPORTING.** Details TBD.
- **PANEL (co-hosted with PR) – WORK/LIFE BALANCE: HOW TO SURVIVE IN THE DEEP END WITH NO FLOATIES.** This panel is looking for speakers from recently completed PhD student to senior level faculty/department chairs to discuss the critical needs of protecting your personal life and research abilities at each level of your career. We will discuss the changing climate of the academic environment, where less and less people are doing more and more work.
- **PANEL (co-hosted with MAC and LGBTQ) – THE SAGA OF UNDERREPRESENTATION: HOW TO OVERCOME THE LACK OF DIVERSITY IN COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENTS.** We are all well aware that while our majors are growing, we still suffer with a disproportionate number of people of difference applying to and succeeding in our majors as undergraduate/graduate students or even faculty. What is the REAL ISSUE? What are we missing? We are seeking panelists to share personal stories as well as research on this subject matter to help us create welcoming spaces in our departments.

- **PANEL (co-hosted with ELECTRONIC NEWS) – UNPAID INTERNSHIPS PART 3: CAN MEDIA OUTLETS SURVIVE WITHOUT THEM?** Recent lawsuits have seen many companies change their internship programs. Many are offering paid positions but many are also eliminating their programs. Film, TV and Electronic News cannot afford to pay interns but also cannot eliminate their intern programs due to their declining numbers. What will become of those internship programs if there is continuing pressure to pay interns?

If you would like to be a part of any of these or EVEN BETTER - propose a NEW joint-panel, please send the following information, listed below, by email (to [eec16@psu.edu](mailto:eec16@psu.edu)) by the deadline of **October 1, 2015**:

#### ICIG Call for Joint-Panel Proposals for AEJMC 2015

The Internship and Careers Interest Groups members are requested to kindly submit joint-panel proposals for PF&R or Teaching Panels for AEJMC 2016 in Minneapolis, MN. ***The joint-panel proposals must list the following:***

1. A brief ***title*** for the session, along with your name and contact information.
2. An indication of which area (***Teaching or PF&R***) the panel covers. Professional freedom and responsibility (PFR) covers Free Expression; Ethics; Legal Issues; Racial, Gender, and Cultural Inclusiveness; and Public Service. Teaching standards panels would focus on such things as standards of academic and professional preparation for teachers in the field, curriculum development, teaching modes, and standards of faculty-administration relationships.
3. A paragraph describing the intended ***content*** of the session. Please outline the specific issues of interest that you believe the panelists will address/discuss, and offer some insight as to how these discussions will be topical and worthwhile for the 2014 convention.
4. Suggestions about specific ***panelists*** who might be able to serve on the panel. Be sure to include panelists from other AEJMC divisions, as we will be working to seek co-sponsors from other divisions in other to schedule the panels. It is a good idea to seek such prospective panelists out over the next couple of weeks to hammer out the common interest themes for the panel before submitting the proposal. ***Please provide a list of names and contact information*** for all prospective panelists.
5. Suggestions for ***divisions or interest groups*** who might consider co-sponsoring the panel with us. Given the limited number of chips available to ICIG, it will be important to propose panels that drive interest in other divisions – and listing those divisions as possible co-sponsors here will help focus our attention when negotiating the schedule. Please provide the contact information for the proposed co-sponsoring division or interest group's programming chair.

The lists of all AEJMC Divisions is available online at:

<http://www.aejmc.com/home/about/groups/divisions/>. The list of all AEJMC Interest Groups is available online at: <http://www.aejmc.com/home/about/groups/interest-groups/>

Thanks again for all your assistance and attention in this matter! Please send all proposals by email to [eec16@psu.edu](mailto:eec16@psu.edu).

Erica Clarke, Vice Head of ICIG – Association for Educators in Journalism and Mass Communication  
John Chapin, Head of ICIG - Association for Educators in Journalism and Mass Communication

## 2015 AEJMC Internships and Careers Interest Group Paper Abstracts

### **Inside The Daily Show with Jon Stewart and the Noetic Crisis of the WGA Strike**

Nathan Rodriguez, Kansas

In Fall 2007 I worked 40 hours per week as a production intern at *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* (TDS). In late October, the Writer's Guild of America went on a nationwide strike, which halted production of the program for the rest of the year. While the first half of the internship provided a glimpse into the production processes and organizational culture of the show, the WGA strike afforded an opportunity to assess how the organization negotiated a noetic crisis.

Schwartzman (1993) argued an ethnographic approach allows researchers to detail both formal and informal components of an entity: Formal aspects are tasks required to produce the end product; informal aspects comprise organizational culture. By stepping into the site of production, those informal and formal components blend, and researchers may sketch a fuller picture of how organizations function. Inductive and exploratory approaches are warranted when little is known about a subject, and in this instance, no researcher had spent time at TDS.

Maynard (2006) argued that forecasting bad news is critical to allay fears and dash rumors. Producers mentioned the possibility of a strike as early as September during the regular all-staff meetings each morning. In late October, Jon Stewart advised the staff during the first irregular (mid-day) meeting that a strike was possible, but remained optimistic regarding a resolution. These irregular all-staff meetings were often introduced and punctuated by gallows humor, but a consistent theme was the notion that the staff was "all in this together."

Stewart discussed his own balancing act of not wanting to be seen as betraying the writers, while keeping *Comedy Central* "at bay" regarding additional staff lay-offs during this period of non-production. According to Stewart, the official excuse for retaining production staff was that they were "working feverishly on a new format for the show," to which he grinned wryly, adding, "and we all know that's going very well."

The staff spent its days playing Scrabble against one another online, taking advantage of the in-house library, forming ad-hoc groups to play *Rock Band*, and engaging in mid-afternoon games of touch football in a nearby park. Senior staff would bring in confections on occasion, mid-day power walks were organized, as well as a contest to "guess the strike end-date," and a few days each week the studio began to air movies that were still in theaters.

The all-staff meetings helped everyone get on the same page and also to air any concerns they might have had. They also brought people closer together during a time of turmoil and uncertainty.

As Stewart noted in his final episode, "It's not the show. It's the process of the show. It's the people of the show and the atmosphere." Clearly the confluence of personalities and superordinate goals at TDS bear some responsibility for its organizational culture. Amenable personalities can therefore respond differently to stressful situations, as what could have been a dire interregnum was recast in buoyant fashion in large part due to the culture that was established and evolved over a decade.

### **Avoiding the "Bad Jump Cut": Developing a Senior Year Experience for Journalism Students**

Lorie Humphrey, M.Ed., Counseling and Career Development

Michael Humphrey, Ph.D. Student, Public Communication and Technology

Transitions are not naturally bad, but the opportunity for a rough transition always looms, often known in video as the bad jump cut. Sometimes students leaving college feel like they're caught in such a cut. They are the same person, but the abrupt edit from undergraduate college student to professional, or job-

seeker, feels like the story “jumped” in an uncomfortable way. For those students’ academic mentors, helping navigate the jump from school to the working world can be one of the most challenging aspects of the job.

Obtaining the job is only first phase of stress in the JMC student-to-job transition. Multiple studies (e.g. Fedler 2004; Buchanan & Keats, 2011; Reinardy, 2011) have shown that jobs in Mass Communication come with a distinct form of stress. According to a study by Career Cast (Kensing, 2014), three of the most stressful jobs (which include military personnel, firefighter, pilot and police officer) are event coordinator, public relations executive and newspaper reporter. In addition, journalism students face all of the transition opportunities and stresses that other students face. According to Chickering and Schlossberg (1998), “Many students find it difficult to leave the structured world of school and move into a world with no organized plan, no admissions directors, no counselors, so student development educators” (p 40).

Issues particular to the transitions of senior students gained attention during the 1990s when The National Resource Center for the Freshman Year Experience and Students in Transition, based out of The University of South Carolina, began holding national conventions to explore the topic. At the outset, the Senior Year Experience was intended to be a flexible concept encompassing the entire university including faculty, staff, student affairs, and the students themselves (Gardner & Van der Veer, 1997). The goals can be categorized into three areas: facilitating integration and closure of the college experience, reflection of the meaning of this experience, and transitioning into the next phase of life (Cuseo, 1998). The vehicle used for implementation can be broken down into three broad categories including formal courses, experiential learning, and events intended to aid in the transition out of school. Using a matrix to cross-sect the goals and vehicles of SYE, we suggest potential journalism customization opportunities. We focused on activities that are either likely taking place in some form or could be implemented by organizations on campus.

**Table 1. Matrix of Possible Curriculum for SYE goals and vehicles.**

	<b>Integration and closure of college life</b>	<b>Reflection of meaning of their college experience</b>	<b>Transition into the world of work</b>
<b>Formal Coursework</b>	Multi-media projects that reflects a senior pre-graduation “bucket list.”	Students interviewing students about the meaning of attending college and graduating.	Data journalism project about personal finance issues within the student’s culture.
<b>Experiential Learning Opportunities</b>	Social media projects that document the senior year of students, which are organized by hashtags.	Service-learning project in which students help high school seniors interested in journalism prepare for college.	Informational interviews of professionals now working in students’ desired fields.
<b>Campus Events</b>	Faculty “roast” and awards ceremony for all graduating seniors.	On campus, multi-media “exhibits” of the coursework and experiential learning opportunities.	Alumni, seniors and faculty dinner to discuss transition opportunities and challenges.

Just as the guided transition should not end with bringing the students into the campus community, neither should it end when students have gone. Students should leave the institution with the groundwork to continue to learn and gain skills throughout their careers. To use another video editing metaphor, they should leave school in a cross-fade, where the leaving and arriving merge into each other as harmoniously as possible. Truly then have they experienced a successful transition.

## **Benefits Of A Closed-Cohort Structure In Online Graduate Programs: Advancing The Career Opportunities Of Mid-Career Communication Professionals**

Justin C. Blankenship, Doctoral Student  
Dr. Rhonda Gibson, Associate Professor

As journalism and communication college curricula have adapted to meet the needs of a rapidly changing industry, one key development is the growth of part-time online graduate programs designed for early- and mid-career professionals. This study examined one specific pedagogical strategy used by some online graduate programs: a closed-cohort model. This type of structure, in which students enter and proceed through the entirety of an academic program together, is designed to foster a sense of community among students and to increase student collaboration and peer learning.

Research has found instructional environments that foster participant interaction have better learning outcomes, particularly in graduate-level education. Closed-cohort programs can encourage this kind of closer connection among learners, more interaction, and more peer-to-peer learning. Creating a “learning community” among students can increase learning outcomes and prevent dropouts. Incorporating some face-to-face interaction among cohort members, especially in the beginning, can also increase a sense of community. However, some research has not found a relationship between cohort structure and learning outcomes, particularly with online education. Additionally, little research has been done on cohort structure in relation to professional development.

To examine the important and impact of closed-cohort design on communication graduate students, this study looked at the Master’s in Technology and Communication (MATC) program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The MATC program is a two-and-a-half-year, part-time, online, closed-cohort graduate program designed for mid-career communication professionals and focuses on new media tools, digital economics, and communication theories to prepare students for leadership in a changing media landscape. It involves mostly asynchronous online learning, in addition to two brief campus residencies that include face-to-face interaction. A survey was distributed to everyone enrolled in the program from 2011, the first year of the program, to 2014 ( $N= 54$ ). It asked students about six key areas related to previous research and the authors’ interests: how much students know and how important they rated the closed-cohort design, what specific elements of online education they feel are important, levels of satisfaction, perceived learning, and “classroom community” among MATC students, what communication channels students use most, what opportunities the closed-cohort design allowed for professional networking among students, and ways the program could be improved. The questionnaire was distributed online and 42 students took the survey, resulting in a 77.8% completion rate. The majority of questions asked student to respond using a seven-point Likert-type scale. All means reported are based on this scale. A few questions allowed for open-ended responses.

The results of the survey demonstrated that MATC students did not feel they knew much about the closed-cohort structure ( $M= 2.67$ ), nor did they think it was very important ( $M= 3.1$ ). However, when given a list of various structural elements related to all online program designs, students rated those associated with closed-cohort structure as most important. They felt that having the opportunity to form and maintain professional networks ( $M= 5.34$ ), meet classmates in person ( $M= 5.19$ ), having a support system of the same classmates throughout the program ( $M=5.17$ ), having a small class size ( $M=4.83$ ), and having a set curriculum ( $M=4.29$ ) were most important. They considered being able to select classes ( $M=3.45$ ;  $SD=1.55$ ), the option to take electives ( $M=3.33$ ), being able to take as many or as few classes at a time as desired ( $M=3.19$ ), and being able to take a break from the program for a period of time ( $M=3.17$ ) as less important. These less important elements are all associated with a more fluid cohort design. Students indicated high levels of satisfaction with the program ( $M= 5.76$ ) and perceived learning ( $M= 5.33$ ). Additionally, they reported very strong feelings of community among their cohorts ( $M= 6.1$ ).

Students were also asked about various channels of communication used among the cohort, excluding those required by program instructors for coursework. According to students, Facebook and email were the

preferred channels for both course and non-course related topics. When given the opportunity to expand on their answers, several students pointed to the private Facebook groups created by each cohort as a valuable resource. Faculty and administrators did not have access to this group. Additionally, many students indicated that if they had kept in contact with members of their cohort ( $M= 6.56$ ) after graduation. Students noted that their cohorts were valuable resources for professional networking and development during and after the program. Cohort members shared job openings with each other and provided advice for both personal and professional issues. Finally, students were asked how the MATC program could be improved. Many pointed to the cohort aspect as being particularly valuable. Some recommended providing more informal networking opportunities in addition to the two on-campus residencies. A minority, about 15%, of students criticized the cohort aspect. They expressed frustration that some members of their cohorts were “overbearing” and dominated online discussion forums. A few also would have liked the opportunity to take electives separate from the cohort.

In general, the results of this survey suggest that a closed-cohort structure for an online master’s program in communication can provide students with a consistent source of support, collaboration, and peer learning. Specifically, if the goal of program directors is to encourage professional networking, a closed-cohort structure would appear to facilitate that goal. Based on the results of this survey, administrators should encourage students to create their own private forums for communication among cohorts, like the Facebook page used by MATC students. To improve a closed-cohort design, instructors and administrators should also provide clear instructions about online discussion protocols and make sure certain students do not dominate the conversation. Overall, students in the MATC program appear satisfied with the cohort design. Authors of the study would recommend program directors to consider a closed-cohort design, particularly for non-traditional students who are interested in professional development and networking among peers.

### **Revisiting “Entering the Game at Halftime:” An examination of how we engage mass communication students in internships and co-curricular activities**

Lauren A. Vicker, Department of Media and Communication, St. John Fisher College

During the most recent recession, our department noticed an increase in the number of transfer students coming into our program, mostly from community colleges, where enrollment was soaring. It appeared anecdotally that these transfer students were not as involved in our internship program or communication-related co-curricular activities (such as the campus newspaper, television station, PRSSA, etc.,) to the same extent as our native students who entered as freshmen. And yet, these experiences are critical to our students’ professional success: they will not find jobs without internship experiences, and they won’t find quality internships without experience in co-curricular activities. So I undertook a pilot study to examine trends in our department over the previous five years. I presented my findings at AEJMC in Denver in 2010, was encouraged to extend the study and thus undertook a large-scale survey of students in mass communication programs across the country.

#### **Prior work**

The mass communication field provides limited research on the subject of internships and almost nothing on engaging students in co-curricular activities. The paper details research from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and research in student development which helped to inform the research design for this study and identified a theory that might be applied.

#### **Research Design**

The study surveyed students in 10% of the programs in the AEJMC directory done in two phases over the course of four years. In the first phase, 53 schools were surveyed and 44 schools in the second phase. The survey was based on both the NSSE survey as well as the survey used in the pilot study.

At the end of the survey, students were asked if they wished to volunteer for an extended interview with the researcher. Seventy students volunteered for these interviews. Because many of the interviewees were from large universities in the south and west, I also conducted five focus groups with students from schools in the East.

### Findings

At many institutions it was difficult to separate out the transfer students for the purposes of this study, so a filter question was used in the survey. Thus data was revealed for both native and transfer students, which expands the usefulness of the findings of this survey.

### Quantitative data

A total of 609 students responded to the survey, with 31% being transfer students.

**Internships.** The vast majority (85%) of both native and transfer students had done or planned to do an internship, and almost all recognized the importance of internships to finding a job after graduation. Students said they made the decision to pursue an internship on their own, but they also cited professor recommendations and information on department websites as factors that convinced them of the importance of internships. The most common reason for not doing an internship was finding the time to fit into their busy schedules.

**Co-curricular Activities.** The survey findings yielded a greater difference between native and transfer students, with 57% of native students and 42% of transfers saying they had already joined a co-curricular. Students were influenced in their decisions by professors and also fellow students. Again, the most common reason for not joining a co-curricular was finding the time, while transfer students also noted the need to make up academic requirements as a contributing factor.

**Information.** Students rated the information they received about internships and co-curricular activities in a generally positive way, but about a third from both groups said the information was fair or poor. Both native and transfer students were very positive about the quality of academic advising they received (with more than half calling it Excellent or Very Good), but were much less happy with the quality of career advising (with less than one-third rating it Excellent or Very Good and 36% rating it Fair or Poor).

### Qualitative information

From the pool of 609 survey respondents, 70 volunteered for interviews, which were ultimately conducted with 24 students, and there were also five focus groups. These discussions yielded different information for native and transfer students. The transfer students often felt left behind, especially on the issue of co-curriculars (being a transfer student, one student remarked, is like “entering the game at halftime” and being expected to get in there and be successful even if you don’t know what happened during the first half). Students cited professors as being very influential, especially when they continuously discuss the importance of getting involved and doing internships to prepare for a career after graduation and incorporated it into their classes (indeed, quite a few students said they got involved in co-curricular activities after being required to participate as part of a class). They also wanted their academic advisors to also serve as career advisors.

Students in the interviews and focus groups also came up with some suggestions for better engaging both native and transfer students in internships and co-curricular activities including a communications fair and a special day/evening set aside for transfer students to meet each other, the faculty, and the dean.

The findings of this study were discussed in terms of the implications for mass communication faculty and the need for more refined research going forward. A theoretical framework for this practical research was also offered.

## “Not Just the Internship People”

By: John Chapin, ICIg Head

Internships and Careers needs to start a national campaign: “Not just the internship people!” Every year, we host a successful pre-conference Bootcamp for internship coordinators. This year, we expanded the Bootcamp to include teaching and advising issues. One participant raised her hand and asked, “What does this have to do with internships?” The simple answer is, “Nothing.... We’re more than just the internship people.”

- If you are researching anything to do with the changing media markets, consider submitting your paper to ICIg.
- If you are researching anything to do with journalism, public relations, blogging, advertising, electronic news, sports, magazines, visual communication (any of the AEJMC divisions), consider submitting your paper to ICIg.
- If you are interested in promoting diversity in the workplace, consider proposing a panel to ICIg.
- If you are concerned about the hostile work environment faced by our female graduates, consider proposing a panel to ICIg.
- If you have a great idea for teaching or advising our students to better prepare them for the changing professional landscape, consider proposing a panel to ICIg.
- And yes, if your focus is internships, consider proposing a panel or submitting a paper to ICIg.
- Finally, our current Call for Panels includes a call for a special Best Practices poster session, BP in ICIg. If you are an internship coordinator, career services staff, an instructor, or advisor, share your best practices with colleagues at the 2016 convention.

Please join us in our national movement: **Internships AND Careers**

The word is getting out there. ICIg was one of the few groups that grew last year, but our research submissions tend to focus only on internships. Please help us by sharing this with a colleague.

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