

CT&M CONCEPTS

ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION IN JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION

2008 Conference Call for Papers

DOMINIQUE BROSSARD
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
CT&M RESEARCH PAPER
CHAIR

April 1st 2008, the deadline for submission to the 2008 AEJMC Convention, is fast approaching. CT&M invites submissions of original research papers pertaining to the study of communication processes, institu-

the paper first page or the running head.

As all the AEJMC divisions, CT&M has moved to an online only paper submission process last year. Consequently, the number of submissions has

increased significantly, CT&M is receiving about 30% more submissions compared to previous years. Submitters took advantage of the speed, efficiency, and low cost of online submission. Unfortunately, some were a little careless in their submissions, more particularly regarding author related information. Please make sure that all authors remove all personally



tions, and effects from a theoretical perspective. CT&M welcomes both conceptual and data-based papers and is open to all systematic methodologies. Authors of the three top-scoring faculty or faculty/student papers will be recognized in the convention program and at the CT&M members' meeting in Chicago.

We strongly encourage submissions by students. First authors of accepted student papers will be awarded \$50 to help offset the cost of traveling to the conference. Winners of the Chaffee-McLeod Award for Top Student Paper will be awarded \$250. Student papers are those having only student authors, i.e. no faculty co-authors, and should be clearly labeled as such on

identifying information from the paper before submitting online in order to help with the blind review process. Remove author names and affiliations from title pages, running heads, and from the paper's hidden document properties before submitting. Papers containing personally identifiable information will not be sent out for review.

Please refer to the AEJMC general call's description of the online submission guidelines for additional information, and feel free to contact Dominique Brossard, CT&M Research Chair, at 608-263-4701 or by e-mail: dbrossard@wisc.edu if you have any questions.

I am looking forward to see you all in Chicago!

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Thoughts from the Head

CT&M & the future of AEJMC

MARIA LEN-RIOS
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
CT&M DIVISION HEAD

Last fall, AEJMC headquarters invited division heads and AEJMC committee members to participate in a series of conference calls and a two-day Strategic Plan Work Session at the Midwinter Meeting in St. Louis. Our charge was to engage in thinking about the future of

the media. Some wanted to see AEJMC have the same recognition and impact as the American Psychological Association. Others thought we should remain more of a neutral organization and simply promote research and its results.

It will be up to AEJMC's membership and leadership to determine the direction that AEJMC will take in the future. If you have any ideas you would like to share, please let me know (lenriosm@missouri.edu). As a division, we will continue our commitment to research methods and theory building. And, as April 1 approaches, I hope that you will send your best research to CT&M and encourage your graduate students to do so too.



María E. Len-Ríos, U. of Missouri, S. Shyam Sundar, Penn State, and Diana Ríos, U. Conn-Storrs, contributed to the development of AEJMC's Strategic Plan during a two-day session at the St. Louis Midwinter Meeting.

AEJMC. The conversations were intended to determine how the divisions and interest groups felt about the organization and to envision what AEJMC might look like in the future. It became clear that the membership has diverse goals and objectives. CT&M, as a division, has always been dedicated to research—that's what we do. And we use our convention time to program as much research as possible (see Doug Hindman's column). Our philosophy has been that while we certainly value teaching and service, research is our primary focus.

There were several ideas that came from the brainstorming sessions that were of interest to our division. For instance, there was a suggestion that perhaps divisions should not be evaluated for their performance in all three areas of research, teaching and service, but rather the divisions should decide how they can best invest their time and resources. Others suggested that AEJMC, as a whole, should market itself as a research think tank. The idea was that AEJMC should pool its expertise and become an international authority on journalism and

Who's in charge here? The NY Times' McCain Story

Edward M. Horowitz, PF&R Chair writes: On February 21, while John McCain was in the middle of his bid to become the Republican presidential nominee, the New York Times published a front-page story about his ties to corporate lobbyists, concerns of quid pro quos, and, most scandalously, rumors of a romance between McCain and a female lobbyist. Numerous ethical questions were immediately raised about the timing and the rationale behind the Times' decision to print this story. I asked Charles H. Warner, Goldenson Chair Emeritus at the University of Missouri School of Journalism and former Vice President of AOL's Interactive Marketing division, if he would write a column about this for the newsletter. (Professor Warner also writes astute media criticism at his blog, *MediaCurmudgeon.com*.) I believe that he gets to the heart of the matter here, and raises some troubling questions about the ethical choices of The New York Times. As always, post your own thoughts on this on the CT&M blog.

The online and off-line media are inundated with opinions and stories about whether or not *The New York Times* should have published the recent front-page story about John McCain's alleged romance and ties to lobbyists. The medium has become the message in this brouhaha.

After days of reading copious blogs and articles about *The Times* article, I've come away with the impression that the Gray Lady has grown old, confused, and lost its memory. Since many types of boats are named after women, I'll extend the metaphor and suggest that the Gray Lady is a vessel that has an incompetent captain who is letting the swabbies run the ship.

This notion first came to me when I read Jay Rosen's thoughtful (as always) blog on the Huffington Post in which he wrote, "There's one person who would have known about the paper's struggles with McCain and his lawyers over today's story, and who read and approved the paper's endorsements – or should have. That is Arthur Sulzberger, Jr., the publisher. And so to ask, 'How does *the Times* endorse McCain with a story like that looming, if it believes in the story?' is to ask, at a minimum, what Arthur thought he was doing." The answer, of course, is that Arthur has no idea what he's doing.

Publisher "Pinch" let executive editor Bill Keller and managing editor Jill Abramson decide whether or not to run the McCain story with the befuddling headline "For McCain, Self-Confidence on Ethics Poses Its Own Risk." A headline and story Columbia Journalism School professor and media critic par excellence

Todd Gitlin mocks: "With that most vapid of introductions (so bland that my eyes glazed over on first inspection), the editors tried to muffle the dynamite that they'd awkwardly stuffed into the nth re-edit of their half-exploding bombshell about--well, what was it about? (1) Intimations of an Iseman affair, or the 'appearance' of an affair, that his aides tried to scotch? (2) McCain's

CHARLES H. WARNER
GUEST COLUMNIST

The Gray Lady has grown old, confused, and lost its memory.

entanglements with lobbyists who cared a good deal about what he did as chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee? Uncertain which way to turn, having not much of a story about (1) and (on the strength of the evidence they published) no smoking gun about (2), they squared the potato and ran with the hodgepodge."

What were Keller and Abramson thinking? Why did they open *The Times* up to such criticism? I think it's because the reporters, not the editors, run the newsroom after the editors screwed up over the Jayson Blair and Judy Miller fiascoes. I suspect the reporters convinced Washington bureau chief Dean Baquet that the story was solid and that they would be scooped by *The Washington Post* and *The New Republic* if *The Times* didn't run the story after delaying for several months.

There has always been conflict between the Washington bureau and the New York newsroom, as Gabriel Sherman succinctly pointed out in his brilliant piece in *The New Republic* online: "The Washington-New York divide is an eternal rift at the Paper of Record. Baquet had successfully brought stability and investigative acumen to the Washington bureau; with the McCain piece, he was being sucked into his first major struggle with New York." Yes, sucked in by reporters.

In his blog, Buzz Machine, Jeff Jarvis wrote about "Folio's report from its conference and a speech by Meredith president Jack Griffin. The fuller context: As a result, the company invested in its interactive and integrated marketing businesses—spending roughly \$600 million since 2002 on launches, acquisitions and building out its existing Web sites, Griffin said, as well as redefining its editorial hiring approach. 'We don't hire editors anymore,' he said. 'We hire content strategists.'"

What *The Times* newsroom needs is a content strategist to sit next to Keller and help him think

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Who's in charge here? The NY Times' McCain Story

strategically [something a good publisher could do, but, then *The Times* publisher is "Pinch," the leader of "the lucky sperm club," (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/charles-warner/the-media-lucky-sperm-clu_b_86560.html) and not the leader of *The Times*). Keller has been beaten over the head so much in recent years from both the

consistent with the Long Run series the paper had done about other candidates, and to kill the alleged romance, because there wasn't sufficient evidence – no semen-stained blue dress.

But there was no strategy. Who's in charge here?

I think the reporters, not the editors, run the newsroom after the editors screwed up over the Jayson Blair and Judy Miller fiascos.

right and the left that the pounding has affected his thinking. He is trying to do good journalism, keep his angry reporters happy, stem circulation declines, and please a feckless boss – too many balls to juggle to try to be strategic.

A content strategist might have advised Keller to think about the implications and timing of running the McCain story: (1) How would running the damaging story look after *The Times* endorsed McCain on January 25 for the February New York Republican primary? Would it reinforce the concept that editorial and news are independent or make Sulzberger look incompetent, as Jay Rosen implied, especially when on the Opinion page of the paper's website there still appeared pictures of Clinton and McCain, along with headlines trumpeting the paper's endorsements long after the primary was over? (2) How would using anonymous sources make *The Times* look after assistant managing editor Allan Siegal's 2004 internal report, which asked, "Can we otherwise squeeze more anonymous sources out of our pages? Can we make our attributions (even the anonymous ones) less murky? Are there some stories we can afford to skip if they are not attributable to people with names?" (from Jay Rosen's Press Think blog)? Wouldn't it open *The Times* to criticism of breaking its own rules, succumbing to tabloiditis, and getting down in the gutter with the *NY Post*?

A good content strategist would have advised Keller to run the story as part of The Long Run series (as *The Times* did) but to run it before the NY primary, just as it ran a Long Run piece on Clinton the day of the primary – it would have been logical. Also, a good content strategist would have advised Keller to run the lobbyist connection part of the story, because that was

Students' perceptions of teaching evals

Last year, Edward Horowitz, former teaching chair and current PF&R chair, wrote a column outlining some of the problems with teaching evaluations. He discussed academic research examining teaching evaluations and offered insight on alternative evaluation measures. This made me wonder, "What do students think about teaching evaluations?" I asked juniors and seniors their perceptions of evaluations to try and understand evals from a student perspective. Student comments confirmed points made previously by Horowitz.

Student respondents stated teaching evaluations are "inconvenient, useless and inaccurate," "a way to get out of class early," and "not an accurate way to measure the effectiveness of an instructor."

When asked if students take evaluations seriously, there were mixed responses. One student commented students take evaluations seriously when they have something positive or negative to say about a teacher or class. Also, the professor's attitude about evaluations can rub off on the students according to one PR major. "Students don't take evaluations seriously, especially if they know the professor is tenured. I've had tenured professors say they're sorry we have to waste time filling them out when it won't matter what students say because the professor is tenured. If what we say doesn't really matter, why really put forth the effort to be honest and provide constructive criticism."

Another student commented, "I take evaluations seriously if a professor makes it clear they're important." Another commented, "I take them more seriously when I know what I say actually affects the professor. If they're not tenured or are just an instructor, I feel the evals mean more in terms of whether they'll get to keep teaching." Students also feel year in school and the type of class impacts comments on evaluations. Several respondents stated they did not understand the purpose of evaluations as freshmen; and others stated evals became more important when they started taking classes in their majors and when classes were smaller and there was more interaction with the professor.

Respondents did not think teaching evaluations were an accurate representation of professors' abilities. One respondent commented, "The scale on the scantron sheet is not explained well enough for us to determine the most accurate number to rate. Also, a professor could be a wonderful teacher but there are always a few students who don't mesh well with them and they take it out on the eval. These respondents could skew the results."

Another student commented testing effects take place because most students are familiar with the evaluation's set up. "They pencil in bubbles without reading the questions. If students have a favorable view of the teacher they will fill in the bubbles further to the right, if not, they will fill in the bubbles further to the left."

Respondents provided alternative ways to evaluate teaching effectiveness. All respondents thought some type of focus group should be held with students to provide an open discussion about the class, and also felt professors should be observed by an administrator. Students recognized the obstacles focus groups and observations have, and most agreed more open-ended questions would provide a forum for constructive criticism.

The final question respondents answered inquired about online rating services (i. e., RateMyProfessor.com). Online services are providing guidance to students, and may provide guidance to faculty as well. One student commented "I never schedule a class without looking at RateMyProfessors.com. You hear honest opinions from other people on campus you'll never meet." Students take comments on these sites seriously because "participants are not required to post comments or provide feedback." These types of sites allow students to see positive and negative comments. Students have to be motivated to post something for others to read. We could read these comments to gain additional insight into students' perceptions because of the motivation students have to post comments, but we can take the good and leave the bad, much like our students do. As one student stated, "Constructive criticisms are nice to read, but the outlandish comments need to be ignored."

Teaching evaluations will continue to frustrate or delight us. At least now we have a better understanding of how students interpret what takes place.

MICHEL M. HAIGH
THE PENNSYLVANIA
STATE UNIVERSITY
CT&M TEACHING CHAIR

2008 AEJMC Conference Program

DOUGLAS BLANKS HINDMAN
 WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
 CT&M PROGRAM CHAIR/VICE HEAD

Maria Len-Rios and I went into the conference planning meeting last December in St. Louis with the goal of increasing our division's potential to program refereed research. If we

density paper session (a first-ever for CT&M), and shared chips for non-research sessions, we ended up with about 63 slots – just two short of the goal of 65.



Art Institute of Chicago

Another, more general goal for the program was to try to find ways to stimulate discussion during the refereed research panels. Discussion in research panels, as with discussion in the classroom and discussion among media audiences, enhances learning.

One way of stimulating discussion is to limit papers to four per session – and we intend to do that as best we can.

Another way is to try new things – such as the high density session in which 8 presenters are given just a few minutes to introduce their projects and then breaking up into smaller groups for discussion.

And finally, we intend to assign discussants to poster presenters so that each gets a chance to discuss his or her research with an informed and interested scholar.

If any of you have other ideas for how to get folks talking during research sessions, please send me an e-mail.

Until then, I've posted below a preliminary look at the 2008 CT&M program grid:

receive as many submissions this year as last, and if we use the suggested 50% acceptance rate, we will need slots for 65 papers.

Using a combination of co-sponsored poster sessions (with CTech and History), a high

			Co-sponsors	Type	Title
Wednesday	8/6/2007	8:15-9:45	CT&M, Ctech	PF&R	<i>Blogging Politics</i>
Wednesday	8/6/2007	10-11:30	Ctech, CT&M	Teaching	<i>Second Life in Academe</i>
Wednesday	8/6/2007	11:45-1:15	Science, CT&M	PF&R	<i>Theory in Science Com</i>
Wednesday	8/6/2007	5-6:30	CT&M	Refereed Research	
Thursday	8/7/2007	8:15-9:45	CT&M, CTech	Refereed Research	
Thursday	8/7/2007	11:45-1:15	CT&M	Refereed Research	
Thursday	8/7/2007	3:15-4:45	CT&M	High Density	
Friday	8/8/2007	12:15-1:30	CT&M	Refereed Research	<i>Scholar-to-Scholar</i>
Friday	8/8/2007	1:45-3:15	CT&M	Refereed Research	
Friday	8/8/2007	3:30-5	ICD, CT&M, Ctech	Refereed Research	<i>Poster Session</i>
Friday	8/8/2007	5:15-6:45	CT&M	Refereed Research	<i>"Best of CT&M"</i>
Friday	8/8/2007	7-8:30	CT&M	Members' Meeting	
Saturday	8/9/2007	10-11:30	CT&M	Refereed Research	
Saturday	8/9/2007	11:45-1:15	CT&M, Magazine	Teaching	<i>Teaching Theory in Skills Classes</i>

Grad students opportunities in CT&M

As the time approaches for graduate students to decide what they are going to submit to AEJMC and whether or not they'll be able to travel to Chicago for this year's conference, I felt it was an appropriate time to remind everyone of the opportunities that abound for graduate students in the CT&M division. This year looks like it will be a great year for CT&M with space for 63 papers in the program in addition to two teaching and two PF&R panels.

If you took my advice from the last column, hopefully you are working on a project that you can turn into a student authored paper by April 1st. If this is the case, make sure you send it to CT&M. CT&M offers the first authors of student-authored papers \$50, which will cover your registration fees and a bit more. Hopefully you are working to make sure your paper is outstanding, and then you may be considered for the Chaffee-McLeod award. This includes a \$250 cash prize in addition to presenting your research in the Best of CT&M research session, which always tends to produce a room full of interested attendees. Hopefully this makes the smell of Chicago-style pizza seems like more and more of a possibility.

For those students who are ABD, there's an opportunity to peer into what life as a faculty member will be like through participating in the

divisional review process as a student reviewer. You will have the ability to see the faculty reviews on the same papers that you review to help you get a good sense of what the reviewing process entails. Please remember that if you are a faculty member reading this column, take a moment to involve your ABD students in this process and encourage them to participate. I don't believe there's such a thing as too many reviewers, so encouraging ABD student participation now ensures that CT&M will have a strong base of reviewers in the future.

Even if you can't yet participate in the paper reviewing, or you won't have your paper finished by the deadline, there are still plenty of reasons to make the trip to Chicago. As I mentioned earlier there are 63 paper slots this year for CT&M, which is more than in previous years, and given CT&M's broad focus you're likely to find several sessions that meet your interests. Networking and collaboration opportunities abound both in and out of sessions, and meeting others who challenge you to think differently is one of the key benefits of conference attendance. I hope all of you submit to, or get involved with, CT&M this year and hopefully I've given you enough reasons to encourage you. I hope to see all of you in Chicago and good luck with your submissions.

MYIAH HUTCHENS HIVELY
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
CT&M GRADUATE STUDENT LIAISON

Call for Barrow Award Applications

Applications are now being accepted for the 2008 Barrow Minority Doctoral Student Scholarship. The scholarship includes a \$1,400 award and a free one-year membership in the Communication Theory and Methodology Division (CT&M) of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC). The scholarship honors Professor Lionel C. Barrow, Jr., of Howard University, in recognition of his pioneering efforts in support of minority education in journalism and mass communication. The award is sponsored by the CT&M Division and made possible in part through contributions from the Minorities and Communication Division, the Commission on the Status of Minorities and personal donations, as well as royalties from Guido H. Stempel and Bruce H. Westley's *Research Methods in Mass Communication*. Minority students (U.S. citizens or permanent residents) enrolled in a Ph.D. program in journalism and/or mass communication are encouraged to apply. Applicants need not be members of AEJMC or the CT&M Division, nor does their work need to address issues of race. Applications will be

judged on the promise the candidate's work shows for making a significant contribution to communication theory and methodology.

To be considered for this scholarship, please send the following materials in a single application package: (1) a letter outlining research interests and career plans, (2) a curriculum vitae, and (3) two letters of recommendation to:

Xiaoli Nan
Assistant Professor
Department of Life Sciences Communication
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Hiram Smith Hall
1545 Observatory Drive
Madison, WI 53706-1215

Submissions must be postmarked no later than May 1, 2008. Questions may be addressed to Prof. Nan at nan@wisc.edu.

The scholarship will be awarded at the CT&M business meeting at AEJMC's 2008 annual convention. The 2008 convention takes place August 6-9 in Chicago, IL.

CT&M is part of AEJMC

JASON REINEKE
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
CT&M MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

It is no secret that the relationship between our division and the association at large has been strained at times. CT&M is somewhat distant and distinct from the rest of AEJMC. There are major methodological, philosophical, and epistemological differences between what we do and the work presented in many of the other divisions. The goals and values that other divisions

comfortable with interpreting regression coefficients as most CT&M members are, but all of them who I met were collegial, intelligent people. It was also interesting to observe their administrative process and get a better understanding of the issues that their division was faced at the time. Participating in other divisions is another way that we can make CT&M's presence better known, and further extend our influence.

Third, and most importantly, make sure to maintain your membership in CT&M, and encourage your colleagues to join as well. The bigger we are as a

division, the more seriously the association has to take us. There is strength in numbers.

I believe that CT&M has a lot to offer AEJMC at large. It would be a shame if we didn't take every opportunity to help the association embody our division's finer attributes. So I encourage you to consider the recommendations above, and to think of yourself not just as a member of CT&M, but a member of AEJMC as well.

We are members of both the CT&M division and AEJMC at large.

have regarding AEJMC are often very different from those that CT&M would prefer to pursue. There has even, from time to time, been talk of CT&M leaving AEJMC altogether.

Retreat is a predictable response. It can certainly be frustrating to deal with a majority that just doesn't think about things the way we do. So it may be tempting to give up rather than to continue dealing with that frustration. It is easier to disengage, to "take our ball and go home," rather than engage the rest of the association and play the game. But, as the old adage goes, quitters never win.

That's why I believe we should always remember that we are members of both the CT&M division and AEJMC at large. We should be on the lookout for ways to extend and enhance our influence in the association. The only way for us to do so is to participate in more, new, and different ways.

There are several things that each of us can do to make our general AEJMC memberships just as rewarding as our memberships in the CT&M division. For one thing, make sure to attend the general business meeting at this year's conference in Chicago. Last year the meeting was held in a packed auditorium, but there were not nearly enough familiar faces from our division in that audience. The general business meeting is great place for CT&M members to be seen, make our presence known, and ensure that our voices are heard in the association's decision-making process.

Second, make it a point to check out some of the other divisions. For example, a couple of years ago I submitted a manuscript to the Law and Policy division because the paper's topic seemed relevant to that division's interests. I also went to a couple of Law and Policy paper sessions in addition to the one where I presented my paper, and attended their business meeting. That division's members might not be quite as

Please post!

join aejmc's communication theory & methodology division



- . journal
- . newsletter
- . top paper awards
- . minority scholarship
- . student travel support
- . student reviewer program
- . syllabus exchange
- . networks

What is Communication Theory & Methodology?

The Communication Theory & Methodology (CT&M) division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) was created in the mid-1960s. The goal of CT&M is to advance the study of communication through theory-based, methodologically-sound research.

The official division journal, *Communication Methods and Measures*, brings developments in methodology, both qualitative and quantitative, to the attention of communication scholars (Publisher Taylor & Francis Group).

The CT&M division is a venue for some of **the field's most exciting research**. The friendly social atmosphere and emphasis on achievement are among the most attractive attributes of our division.

CT&M has traditionally been a leader at encouraging research by graduate students. The first division of AEJMC to have a **student paper competition**, CT&M awards \$250 to the Top Student Paper, as well as \$50 to first author of student papers to help **offset the conference costs**.

CT&M is currently finalizing a **new leadership structure** to take effect at the 2008 conference in Chicago. The goals are to create a balanced and efficient distribution of administrative work. This new structure will include **service opportunities for both faculty and graduate students**.

If you are interested in the theory and methodology of communication research, CT&M should be your first AEJMC division.

For more information:

Visit the CT&M Web site at

<http://aejmctm.blogspot.com>

or contact Jason Reineke: reineke.6@osu.edu

2006-2007 CT&M OFFICERS

DIVISION HEAD

Maria Len-Rios
362 McReynolds Hall
School of Journalism
University of Missouri
Columbia, MO 65211
Phone: 573.884.0111
Fax: 573.882.4823
Email: lenriosm@missouri.edu

VICE-HEAD AND PROGRAM CHAIR

Doug Blanks Hindman
Edward R. Murrow School of Communication
204 Communication Addition
PO Box 642520
Pullman, WA 99164-2520
Phone: 509.335.6149
Email: dhindman@wsu.edu

RESEARCH CHAIR

Dominique Brossard
School of Journalism & Mass Communication
University of Wisconsin-Madison
5168 Vilas Communication Hall
821 University Ave.
Madison, WI 53706
Phone: 608.263.4701
Fax: 608.262.1361
Email: dbrossard@wisc.edu

PLANNING/RESEARCH REVIEWER COORDINATOR

Hernando Rojas
Department of Life Sciences Communication
University of Wisconsin - Madison
440 Henry Mall
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
Phone: 608.262.7791
Email: hrojas@wisc.edu

TEACHING CHAIR

Michel Haigh
College of Communications
Pennsylvania State University
221 Carnegie Building
University Park, PA 16802
Phone: 814.863.3850
Email: mmh25@psu.edu

PROFESSIONAL FREEDOM & RESPONSIBILITY CHAIR

Edward Horowitz
School of Communication
Cleveland State University
2121 Euclid Avenue, MU 239
Cleveland, OH 44115-2214
Phone: 216.687.3996
Fax: 216.687.5435
Email: e.horowitz1@csuohio.edu

MEMBERSHIP/RECRUITMENT CHAIR

Jason Reineke
School of Communication
The Ohio State University
3016 Derby Hall
154 N. Oval Mall
Columbus, OH 43210
Phone: 614.323.2473
Email: reineke.6@osu.edu

GRADUATE STUDENT LIAISON

Myiah Hutchens Hively
School of Communication
The Ohio State University
3016 Derby Hall
154 N. Oval Mall
Columbus, OH 43210
Email: hively.15@osu.edu

BARROW SCHOLARSHIP CHAIR

Xiaoli Nan
Department of Life Sciences Communication
University of Wisconsin - Madison
440 Henry Mall
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
Phone: 608.264.0482
Email: nan@wisc.edu

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Andrew Mendelson
Department of Journalism
School of Communications and Theater
Temple University
2020 North 13th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19122
Phone: 215.204.5020
Fax: 215.204.1974
Email: andrew.mendelson@temple.edu

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