



Get ready for Chicago 2012

Call for papers: AEJMC 2012

The CT&M Division accepts original research papers that advance the literature in mass communication theory, research methods, or both.

CT&M welcomes both conceptual

and data-based papers and is open to all methodological approaches. Please refer to the Summer 2011 CTM Concepts Division newsletter for a complete list of topics and papers presented last year to get a better idea of the potential "fit" of your paper (<http://aejmc.net/ctm/newsletter/>). Recent CT&M papers include research in political communication, health communication, computer-mediated communication, international communication, and broader media effects.

Paper Competitions

CT&M sponsors three paper competitions: faculty or faculty/student top three-paper competition, the top-three student paper competition, and the top theory paper competition. Winners of all awards will be recognized in the convention program and/or at the CT&M members' meeting in Chicago.

We strongly encourage submissions by students. Winners of the Chaffee-McLeod Award for Top Student Paper will be awarded \$250; two additional top student papers will also receive cash prizes. To be considered for the student paper competition, all authors must be students, and the author(s) must indicate on the title page and in the abstract "student paper competition."

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of AEJMC, and CT&M's

history of promoting theory, this year CT&M will also recognize the best theory paper. A theory paper may extend what is known about the current workings of a theory by including a data analysis section, or strictly extend the current theory literature without including data. In order to be considered for best theory paper award, authors (who may be students, faculty, or a combination) must indicate on the title page and in the abstract "theory paper competition."

Requirements

Please limit papers to no more than 25 pages (double-spaced) in length, excluding tables and references. Please limit papers to a total of 35 pages total (including text, tables, and references). Please refer to the AEJMC general paper call for this year's online submission guidelines. Please make sure there is no identifying information in the body of the paper or in the document properties. Co-authors cannot be added after a paper has been reviewed.

At least one author of an accepted faculty paper must attend the conference to present the paper. If student authors cannot be present, they must make arrangements for the paper to be presented by someone else. Failure to be present or provide a presenter for any paper will result in a one-year ban on the review of papers for all of the authors involved. Authors of accepted papers are required to forward papers to discussants and moderators prior to the conference.

If you have questions, please contact Rosanne Scholl, CT&M research chair, at rscholl@lsu.edu.

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CT&M: The glue holding AEJMC together

THOUGHTS FROM THE HEAD

MICHEL HAIGH
PENNSYLVANIA STATE
UNIVERSITY
CT&M HEAD

Communication theory and methodology are two important parts of all AEJMC divisions/interest groups. CT&M is in a unique position because the division has a direct connection to every AEJMC division/interest group. For example, last year CT&M had research presented on: political communication, health communication, computer-mediated communication, international communication, as well as broader media effects research. CT&M also offered a home for methods pieces and theoretical pieces.

Because CT&M is unique, we are able to partner with a wide variety of other divisions to sponsor teaching, research, PF&R, and preconference sessions.

This cooperative spirit has led to a partnership for the 2012 preconference. CT&M will be co-sponsoring two preconference sessions with

“Because CT&M is unique, we are able to partner with a wide variety of other divisions to sponsor teaching, research, PF&R, and preconference sessions.”

MC&S. An introductory session to social network analysis will be held on August 8 from 1 – 5 p.m. An advanced social network analysis session will be held from 7 – 9 p.m. for those who are interested in learning more about the NodeXL updates. Marc Smith will be leading both sessions again this year. The full preconference announcement is in the newsletter.

I'm pleased to announce the co-sponsors of the Barrow Scholarship have decided to increase the amount they provide. MAC and CSM will each provide \$100 more starting with the 2012 award. The endowment amount will still fluctuate depending on the interest, and an anonymous

donor will be providing \$600 toward the scholarship. I have been working with several other AEJMC divisions to see if they would like to contribute to the scholarship starting in 2013. This is still an ongoing discussion. CT&M will continue to run the scholarship call for applicants, judge the entrants, and select the winner. I am still waiting to hear from the AEJMC leadership if the Barrow Scholarship can be presented during the AEJMC general assembly.

If you have not “liked” the new CT&M Facebook page, please do so to keep informed. There is not a way to transfer the “fans” of the last Facebook page to the new one.

I have worked with AEJMC about updating the options for reviewers to use when evaluating theory-only papers. It is difficult to review a theory paper when the NA option is not available and when all questions are mandatory. The methods questions have been updated in All Academic so reviewers should find it easier to evaluate theory papers in the 2012 paper competition. There are special instructions for the three methods questions, but please note All Academic is not able to provide an NA option. The best way to handle this is to make the methods questions “non mandatory” and provide directions to the reviewers.

Taylor and Francis agreed to boost their contribution to the preconference by \$250. They will not sign a multi-year pledge of support for the AEJMC preconference workshop, but have indicated they will continue to support the preconference for the next several years without an “official agreement.”

Chicago starts the 100 anniversary of AEJMC. Jason provides an update on the PF&R and teaching panels CT&M will be co-sponsoring in Chicago while detailing the CT&M program.

If you have any ideas or concerns you would like the executive board to work on in 2012, please email me (mmh25@psu.edu).

Smith slated for two social network analysis workshops in Chicago



The Communication Theory & Methodology Division and the Mass Communication & Society Division of AEJMC announce their preconference workshops “Using NodeXL for Social Network Analysis – For Beginners” and “Advanced Social Network Analysis” with Dr. Marc A. Smith.

Smith’s NodeXL program is an easy to use, open-access program for social network analysis. It can be used to examine message boards, blogs, wikis, and friend networks.

Two sessions will be held on Wed., August 8, 2012 at the Chicago Marriott Downtown. The first session is for those who are new to social network analysis. The session will be held from 1 – 5 p.m. Smith will provide some background on the theory of social network analysis, before ending the beginner session with some “hands on” training using NodeXL. This intro session will be similar to the session Smith presented in 2011 in St. Louis (back by popular demand).

Smith will then present an advanced social network analysis session from 7 – 9 p.m. for those who have previous experience using NodeXL.

Participants will need to bring their computers since Smith will provide guidance and “hands on” training during the session. He’ll provide all registered participants information prior to their arrival in Chicago.

Smith is a sociologist specializing in the social

organization of online communities and computer mediated interaction. He currently leads the Connected Action consulting group in Silicon Valley, CA. He founded and managed the Community Technologies Group at Microsoft Research in Redmond, WA. He led the development of social media reporting and analysis tools for Telligent Systems. He is co-founder of the Media Research Foundation (<http://www.smrfoundation.org/>) “which is dedicated to Open Tools, Open Data, and Open Scholarship related to social media.”

Smith’s research focuses on computer-mediated collective action: the ways group dynamics change when they take place in and through social cyberspaces. Smith visualizes social cyberspaces, mapping and measuring their structure, dynamics and life cycles. At Microsoft, he developed the “Netscan” web application and data mining engine that allows researchers studying Usenet newsgroups and related repositories of threaded conversations to get reports on the rates of posting, posters, crossposting, thread length and frequency distributions of activity.

Registration information can be found on the AEJMC conference registration site (starting later this spring) (<http://www.aejmcchicago.org/>). Cost to attend is \$45 for AEJMC members and \$25 for graduate students. Members will be able to register for the preconference at the same time they register for the AEJMC conference.

Please email Michel M. Haigh (mmh25@psu.edu) if you have any questions.

CT&M Programming for AEJMC 2012

JASON REINEKE
MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY
CT&M PROGRAM CHAIR AND
VICE-HEAD

The Communication Theory and Methodology (CT&M) division is programmed well for the 2012 conference in Chicago.

The division is offering not one, but two pre-conference sessions in response to the popularity of last year’s presentation on social network analysis using NodeXL (see *Smith*, above). Social network analysis conducted using NodeXL can be used to examine microblogs, friend networks, wikis, tube channels, and other forms of social media. Those interested are welcome to participate in both sessions. These sessions are presented thanks to the

co-sponsorship of the Mass Communication and Society (MC&S) division.

The division’s research, professional freedom and responsibility (PFR), and teaching sessions were placed as prominently as possible throughout this year’s program with first consideration given to the division’s prioritization of research.

CT&M’s full program is presented on page 8. (PF&R = Professional Freedom & Responsibility, Teaching = Teach.; all times UTC-5 hours, US CDT.)

Continued on page 8

Results of the 2011 membership survey

MIKE SCHMIERBACH
PENN STATE UNIVERSITY
MEMBERSHIP/RECRUITMENT
CHAIR

In my role as membership chair, my duties include both tracking the needs of current members and recruiting new ones. Some notes on the former follow, but first a couple points on the latter.

One issue I frequently encounter among non-members is the challenge of adding CT&M membership when someone is already an AEJMC member. I've checked with AEJMC, and they report that individuals can add the division to their existing membership.

Encourage your peers who might be interested in CT&M and are already members of AEJMC to join the division by contacting AEJMC's membership coordinator at aejmcmemsub@aol.com, or getting in touch with me at mgs15@psu.edu. At this time of year, in addition, it's a great time to become a new AEJMC member or to renew your existing membership, and that means you can support the division by checking the CT&M box on the membership form. CT&M includes a number of benefits, including your subscription to

those who were more engaged and active in the division.

While respondents are somewhat likely to report attending at least one CT&M session (53% attended at least one in 2011), they tend to miss the business meeting (only 28% made it in 2010, and that dropped to 19% in 2011). More than half (57%) had not attended a single business meeting in the last five years, despite only 19% reporting missing all of the last five years of AEJMC meetings. Reasons for this varied, but 53% of those not attending a business meeting reported scheduling conflicts. It appears CT&M needs to do more to involve its membership in AEJMC events, including the business meeting and regular sessions.

Members appear to see the division as selective and reaching an appropriate audience. On a 5-point scale, with higher numbers indicating greater agreement, respondents scored a 3.56 in saying that their research will "reach the right audience" and just a 2.32 when saying "it's easy to get a paper

accepted" with regards to reasons for submitting to CT&M. The division should continue to foster and enhance its reputation as a place where strong research is submitted and presented, while also reaching out to draw additional submissions.

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Communication Methods and Measures, which is available to all members but may not be otherwise available at your campus library.

Membership also supports the awards and scholarship that the division supports, all of which help promote some of the best research in AEJMC, including innovative methods, cutting-edge theory development, and an excellent scholarly community that can help shape your research and guide your scholarship.

In the fall of 2011 CT&M conducted a survey of its members, hoping to gather updated data on your interests and feelings toward the division. I will present a more complete discussion of these data, including comparisons to prior surveys, at the annual meeting in Chicago. Meanwhile, here are some highlights from the survey along with my own thoughts about what they imply.

We received 76 responses, or approximately a 28% response rate. Of course, we have no way of knowing the characteristics of those who didn't respond, but it seems likely the replies came from

Related to this, members reported solid satisfaction with the research presented at the conference; 64.5% indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of presented papers. By contrast, only 35.5% were satisfied with non-research panels. One potential issue is that members simply are not as interested in such panels, and AEJMC does limit the ability of the division to eliminate such panels, but further exploration of member desires for non-research panels could prove useful.

Respondents had marginally favorable impressions of the reviewing process. On the same 5-point scale, participants slightly agreed that they receive "useful reviews when submitting to CT&M," scoring a mean of 3.38. Similarly, while 36.3% of respondents indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with paper feedback, clearly there is room for improvement. It strikes me that this is an area where the division could distinguish itself. A quick glance at our list of reviewers shows many of the most prominent names in the field, yet the quality of our reviews is varied (like most of those at major conferences). If CT&M could offer even better

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Looking forward to this summer's PF&R

MYIAH HUTCHINS
TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
PF&R CHAIR

Our sessions for this August are now official, and we have three PF&R sessions to look forward to in Chicago. Two of our sessions will be on Thursday, and our final session will be on Friday.

Our first session (co-sponsored with ComSHER), scheduled for Thursday at 8:15 a.m., will focus on audience analysis. The purpose of this session will be to engage and inform audience members regarding current trends in audience analysis, by taking advantage of the wealth of agencies and polling firms located in Chicago. The final roster of panelists is still being finalized, but they will be address questions such as the importance of determining your target market and how new media influences audience analysis strategies and outreach programs.

Our second session (co-sponsored by the Graduate Student Interest Group), scheduled for Thursday at 5 p.m., will sound familiar to those who attended the Best Of session last year. Authors of last year's top paper--Rob Wicks, Esther Thorson and Glenn Leshner--will spend the entire session answering questions about their paper

"Experimental Methodology in Journalism and Mass Communication Research," which focused on the debates surrounding experimental research.

Because of the overwhelming response and debate sparked by their research, we have invited them back to discuss the seven key areas of contention regarding experiments. Even if you are not an experimental scholar, this session can be helpful when reviewing papers. Moreover, it will surely include an exciting discussion of the role experiments play in the field of communication.

Our final session, scheduled for Friday at 3:15 p.m., will be lead by the Small Programs Interest Group. The session will feature a discussion of a hot-topic news issue that emerges late spring. While the exact topics to be discussed has yet to be finalized, you can be assured that this session will be of interest to those of us who study news content.

I hope all of our members will find these panels interesting, and I look forward to seeing you all in Chicago in August!

Membership survey, cont.

reviewing, it would be a distinguishing element, especially given the generally awful quality of conference reviewing.

The division also has the reputation for requiring "complex methods," with participants agreeing somewhat (3.24 on the same 5-point scale) that such methods are required for papers. At one level, this can be a good thing — a division that requires appropriately sophisticated methods seems like a desirable outlet. However, CT&M also hopes to present itself as a division where strong theory is always welcome. Hopefully, changes this year to allow for an "NA" entry on data-related categories for non-data-driven papers and the addition of the theory paper competition will help expand the sorts of papers that are accepted while still maintaining high standards.

Although respondents had a generally favorable impression of CM&M as a journal, with most agreeing that it publishes useful research (3.87 on a 5-point scale) and that it is a significant benefit of membership (3.83, with both among the highest scores on the survey), the journal remains underused by members. More than half of members said they had not used the journal in their own teaching or research, and just 9 respondents had

ever submitted an article. The division might think about ways to promote appropriate journal submissions and to highlight useful articles for the membership.

The newsletter continues to be the most-used form of communication from the division to its members. More than one-half of members reported using the newsletter, while only one-quarter used either the Web site or the Facebook page. Members strongly indicated that their preferred method of communication was via e-mail, even though many suggested they did not immediately read the newsletter because it did not arrive at a convenient time. Some efforts could be undertaken to point members to the Web site at more regular and convenient intervals, and to offer more valuable and unique resources there, but clearly continued distribution of the newsletter is required in the immediate future.

I look forward to offering further details in Chicago at the members meeting, and hope to see you all there. Meanwhile, please help the division by renewing your membership and encouraging others to add the division to their existing (or new) AEJMC memberships.

The “informal” side of teaching

AARON VEENSTRA
SOUTHERN ILLINOIS
UNIVERSITY CARBONDALE
CT&M TEACHING STANDARDS
CHAIR

As a graduate student, I had the good fortune to be part of a productive and well-established student/faculty collaborative research group. Although I took many formal theory and methods courses, working with the group was really where I learned to “do research.” I wasn’t alone in this, either – the group was always described to each year’s newcomers as, first and foremost, a learning experience.

Having been immersed in this terrific learning environment for several years, it was only natural that I’d try to replicate it as a professor. Working with one of my new colleagues, we began recruiting

environment and a great way to get many people involved in data-collection.

Discussing research in an informal setting like this is easy to mentally separate from “teaching,” because it’s much more like a conversation than what we tend to do in the classroom. Are there lessons in it that can be carried over to other areas of informal teaching? I think there are.

Lately I’ve become frequently sought out for independent studies, primarily because our program is light on professors that study new media from a traditional mass communication

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students interested in new media and political communication, and we’ve now got a group that’s off to a good start. But in my interest in re-creating the great learning environment I’d had as a student, I never stopped to wonder what such a group would be like as a teaching environment.

Working with this group is just one area in which I – and most of us, I’d imagine – engage in what we might call “informal” teaching. Putting together an independent study with a student, preparing a student for prelims and working with a less-experienced research assistant could all fall in this category. They lack the structured reading, response and group discussion that define the typical graduate course; perhaps more importantly, they rely significantly on student initiative to function.

After doing this for a couple years, I’ve recently found myself trying to assess it in terms of teaching for the first time. Writing up my year in review for my department last month, I found myself noting that running the group was similar to teaching an additional class. Most of the students involved are research rookies – two were part of our first go-round last year, while the others are still taking introductory theory and methods courses. A big part of my response to their enthusiastic inexperience has been a focus on content analysis, which is both workable in an ad hoc teaching

perspective. In developing reading lists and project goals for these students, I’ve tried to think of the independent study as a semester-long version of the conversations we often have in the research group. In some cases I’m working with individual members of the group, which I think makes the process much fuller, but even when not, the conversational model provides a versatility that can be quite useful.

Because independent study students often come to me with a project idea that involves some cutting-edge aspect of communication technology, I tend to have them read a healthy portion of brand new material – sometimes pre-publication “online first” articles and conferences papers. For some students this works wonderfully; others need more grounding in underlying theory first.

One student recently expressed a preference for book-length treatments of theory, noting that he was having trouble extracting everything he needed from the articles. This gave us an opportunity to not only rearrange and revamp some of the readings, but also to discuss how theory is developed and refined. Having that conversation in the context of the ideas he’s pursuing in his research project seemed to help them click much more solidly than they might have in the more abstract setting of a general theory class.

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From the grad student perspective

*JUSTIN WALDEN
PENN STATE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE STUDENT LIAISON*

Have a theory-focused paper? What about a study that tests and validates measures? Or perhaps an article that proposes a new way of collecting data?

Speaking from personal experience, I encourage doctoral and masters students to consider submitting articles to the CT&M Division for presentation at this year's AEJMC conference.

"...it is up to current students to define how the field should be studied in the coming years."

My fellow students should find the process of submitting to the division challenging and rewarding. Even if your paper is not accepted, the reviewer feedback should give you a start on a journal submission. What's more, the division offers three cash awards for top student papers.

I have presented two articles in the division in the last two conferences and both have fundamentally changed my approach to scholarship.

My first article was a concept explication that I presented during a poster session. My discussant may not remember the study, but his feedback was clear, direct, and forced me to rethink how I define concepts in studies.

Writing a study-length explication is a worthwhile exercise for those who are just learning the literature. You become immersed in the material (really immersed) and argue why a topic should be studied and how it should be studied.

Concept explications can be hard to pull off, but they are manageable projects for graduate students if they are written right. With new media changing by the hour, our field needs studies that provide

clarity and theoretical focus to emerging terms.

Meanwhile, an article I presented during a panel session in St. Louis last year was invaluable to my comprehensive examination and will be quite useful for my dissertation. The paper was a new look at a historically underutilized research method. Again, feedback from the panel helped me sharpen my article for a journal submission this year.

I am of the mindset that it is up to current students to define how the field should be studied in the coming years.

Revisiting and discussing methods questions will help graduate students leave their mark in communication and media studies. Our mentors and more established peers can help us refine our arguments, but it is up to us to start conversations.

As a third-year PhD student I sometimes see a lack of finish with studies (this is with my own work and articles I review). We graduate students work hard on our studies. We dig deep into the literature. We run complex tests and spend endless hours reviewing data.

Yet it is the back end of studies that often need development. So you ran a study ... now what? What does this tell us about theory?

Submitting to CT&M is not a sure thing for generating a publication. However, it is the first step in advancing your skills beyond the classroom. Personally, I have learned how to conclude articles with greater originality and with a much stronger evaluation of the literature.

Regardless of what you get from the experience, presenting articles and getting division reviews will make you a better scholar at a critical development stage.

Informal learning, cont.

I think these informal settings present great opportunities for students to learn how to be researchers, but I would be remiss if I didn't also acknowledge the big benefit I get from them. I teach one graduate course each year, and when I'm not teaching one, all this informal teaching helps keep my research mind in shape by making me

constantly evaluate the ideas I'm working on, both before and while discussing them. Doing this with students means being able to explain "why" in ways that I probably wouldn't have to think about as much working strictly with colleagues or research assistants.

Call for Barrow Scholarship applications

Applications are now being accepted for the 2012 Barrow Minority Doctoral Student Scholarship. The scholarship includes a \$2,000 award and a free one-year membership in the Communication Theory and Methodology Division (CT&M) of AEJMC.

The scholarship honors the late Professor Lionel C. Barrow, Jr., of Howard University, in recognition of his pioneering efforts in support of minority education in journalism and mass communication. Reflections on Dr. Barrow from previous scholarship winners are available in the Spring 2009 edition of CT&M Concepts, available at <http://aejmc.net/ctm/newsletter/>. The award is designed to aid doctoral students in journalism or mass communication programs to complete their dissertation research and academic studies. The students' work does not need to address issues of race.

The award is sponsored by the CT&M Division and is made possible in part through contributions from the Minorities and Communication Division, the Commission on the Status of Minorities and personal donations.

Racial or ethnic minority students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents and are enrolled in a Ph.D. program in journalism or mass

communication are encouraged to apply. Applicants need not be members of AEJMC or the CT&M Division.

Applications will be evaluated on the basis of candidates' capacity for making significant contributions to communication theory and methodology. To be considered for this scholarship, please provide the following: (1) a letter outlining research interests and career plans, (2) a curriculum vitae, and (3) two letters of recommendation. The letter and CV should be sent via e-mail to Dr. Mike Schmierbach, Barrow Scholarship Chair, mgs15@psu.edu. The letters of recommendation should be sent directly by the recommender to the same address. Letters of recommendation only may also be sent via regular mail if that is the preference of the recommender; letters can be mailed to Mike Schmierbach, Ph.D., Barrow Scholarship Chair, Assistant Professor, College of Communications, Carnegie Building, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802.

Submissions must be postmarked no later than May 1, 2011. Questions may be addressed to Prof. Schmierbach at mgs15@psu.edu.

The scholarship will be awarded at the 2012 AEJMC Conference in Chicago, August 9-12.

CT&M Programming for AEJMC 2012

Wednesday	8/8	Preconference 1: NodeXL for Beginners	1:00 – 5:00 pm
Wednesday	8/8	Preconference 2: Advanced Social Network Analysis	7:00 – 9:00 pm
Thursday	8/9	Preconference 2: Advanced Social Network Analysis	8:15 – 9:45 am
Thursday	8/9	REFEREED RESEARCH	1:30 – 3:00 pm
Thursday	8/9	PF&R, GEIG co-sponsor (Experimental Methodology)	5:00 – 6:30 pm
Friday	8/10	REFEREED RESEARCH	8:15 – 9:45 am
Friday	8/10	REFEREED RESEARCH	11:45 – 1:15 pm
Friday	8/10	PF&R, SPIG, CT&M cosponsor (Hot Topics)	3:15 – 4:45 pm
Saturday	8/11	REFEREED RESEARCH (poster)	8:15 – 9:45 am
Saturday	8/11	REFEREED RESEARCH	1:45 – 3:15 pm
Saturday	8/11	BEST OF REFEREED RESEARCH	5:15 – 6:45 pm
Saturday	8/11	Member's Business Meeting	7:00 – 8:30 pm
Sunday	8/12	TEACH., COMSHER, CT&M cosponsor (Grant Strategies)	8:15 – 9:45 am

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