

# Annual Report 2007–2008

## Mass Communication & Society Division

### **1. Officers**

#### **Division Head**

Diana Knott Martinelli  
West Virginia University

#### **Vice Head**

Jennifer Henderson  
Trinity University

#### **Immediate Past Head**

Marie Hardin  
Pennsylvania State University

#### **Secretary/Newsletter Editor**

Cary Frith  
Ohio University

#### **Professional Freedom & Responsibility Co-Chairs**

Jennifer J. Fleming  
California State University, Long Beach

Francesca Carpentier  
University of North Carolina at  
Chapel Hill

#### **Research co-chairs**

Janet A. Bridges  
Sam Houston State University

Shahira Fahmy  
Southern Illinois

#### **Teaching Standards Co-Chairs**

Frank Dardis  
Pennsylvania State University

Dan Haygood  
University of Tennessee

#### **Midwinter Research Coordinator**

Donnalyn Pompper  
Temple University

#### **Webmaster**

Kevin Williams  
Mississippi State University

#### **Graduate Student Liaison**

Andrea Holt Duke  
University of Alabama

### **2. The demographic form is attached (in a scanned PDF).**

The PDF format created problems for completing and attaching this form electronically. Therefore, the form was printed, completed manually, then scanned and saved as a PDF (attached). Also, it is difficult to ascertain the ethnicities of MC&S convention participants. Headquarters staff may want to consider an optional electronic demographic form as part of the All Academic paper submission process. I plan to alert our officers for next year to keep diversity in mind when selecting panelists, moderators, and discussants by mentioning it at our members' meeting and by including it in our more formal MC&S officer descriptions that are being developed to help us provide better and more consistent guidance to those who serve.

### **3. Weighting of activities**

As in the previous year, the division during 2007–2008 emphasized teaching, research, and PF&R in equal ways. Activities for each area are described below.

#### **4. Goals for 2007–2008**

The goals of the incoming division head were met with varying degrees of success. A co-chair structure was maintained for division continuity, engagement and support and member benefits were highlighted explicitly via the newsletter and listserv and implicitly via the Web site. The division also moved forward in promoting itself by inquiring about division letterhead on which officers can correspond with division participants and guests. A division-wide online survey also was conducted to learn what MC&S offerings and activities the membership valued and to hear members' views about the current state and future directions of our profession. These latter questions were developed to respond to AEJMC President Charles Self's charge to division heads last summer. However, despite a more organized newsletter production schedule and new, highly skilled and conscientious newsletter editor, the winter newsletter production was significantly delayed owing to some unanticipated technical glitches. These have been resolved, and the summer issue was produced on schedule. In addition, there remained some judging/scoring questions involving z scores that I had hoped to avoid this year, as the association continues its transition to online research submissions. Our research co-chair Janet Bridges has communicated these concerns to AEJMC officers. In addition, it was not possible to gauge accurate numbers of student submissions because our division does not have a separate student submission category. This is done intentionally to allow full competition across all papers. An electronic box to check if a paper author is a student or faculty member in the All Academic system could help this process.

Incoming Division Head Jennifer Henderson has the following goals:

- 1) Encourage AEJMC members to identify MC&S as their primary association affiliation;
- 2) Encourage graduate student engagement in the division
- 3) Reinforce the MC&S Division and Promising Professors' brands.

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#### **RESEARCH:**

##### **5. Number of general research paper submissions**

150; number of acceptances: 74; 49% acceptance rate.

MC&S identified the top three research papers overall. The first place winner will be given a cash award of \$100 and a plaque at the 2008 AEJMC convention; the second and third place winners will receive a certificate.

##### **6. Number of student papers for the Moeller and special call competitions**

7 (that included a faculty letter to document the class work); number of acceptances 2; 28.5%.

MC&S continued the annual Moeller student paper competition, awarding a top prize of \$100 and a plaque for the best paper written by a student for a class project. The division also awarded cash prizes to the top three student papers in general; the top author will receive a plaque and \$100; the other two will receive certificates and \$75 and \$50, respectively. These two awards help recruit young researchers from a variety of backgrounds into MC&S.

Number of papers submitted to the Special Call, New Media and Politics is unknown. (The research co-chairs would have had to open every paper file again to ascertain this number. See the reference to this problem under section 4 above.) Number of acceptances: 3.

This paper competition was initiated four years ago by division head Denis Wu and has been continued, with the division head choosing the call's theme. Winners will receive certificates at the 2008 convention.

### **7. Overview of judging process**

The division received a total of 150 papers submitted electronically to our paper competition site by the 11:59 p.m. (Central Time) April 1 deadline. Each of the papers was reviewed by three judges (see No. 8 below for explanation). The division used, as it has in past years, the standard "Judging Sheet: AEJMC Division Research Papers" loaded on the website for judges to be able to enter scores directly into the system. Judges were sent instructions to log themselves into the system and create their own passwords for accessing their online papers. Those who did not were manually entered in the systems. After all scores were entered into the system, the computer system calculated both the mean score and z-score for each paper. Using both scores, papers with the highest scores plus considerations of reviewers' rankings and recommendations, were selected for presentation at the convention. For this basic selection, we made no distinction between student and faculty papers or with the papers in the special competitions.

The next stage was to cluster the accepted papers into themes to create research panels. By May 15, authors were notified of acceptance or rejection by bulk e-mail through the AllAcademic website e-mail function. Accepted presenters were also sent a copy of the programs that contains all the division's sessions, presentation times and dates. By May 25, all authors were notified of how to view reviewers' comments and scores at the AllAcademic site. By June 13, they were also provided with their moderator and discussant names.

Based on standardized scores and reviewers' rankings and recommendations, the top three faculty papers and student papers were selected. Winners for the Moeller competition and the special call competition also were selected.

The division used the standard reviewing criteria for the 2008 paper competition (as follows):

**MC&S REVIEWER FORM – 2008 AEJMC CONVENTION**

	1	2	3	4	5
The purpose of the paper is stated clearly. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The paper is organized effectively. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The literature review is adequate. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The research method is described clearly. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The research method is appropriate and effective. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The evidence is good and related to the purpose of the paper. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The evidence is presented clearly. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The conclusions are related directly to the purpose of the paper. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The evidence supports the conclusions. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The subject represents a significant direction for communication research. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The questions addressed in this study are handled creatively. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The writing is good. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This paper is relevant to the focus of the division. *	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**8. Total judges:**

89; nearly all judges reviewed 5 papers each, with the exception of a couple of judges who assisted at the last minute with only 3 papers each and one hearty volunteer who reviewed 11. The research co-chairs worked diligently throughout the year to recruit judges. We sent the call for judges through the division’s newsletter and email listserv and also used personal contacts to recruit judges.

**9. Other types of refereed competition**

For the third year, the division awarded the Mass Communication & Society Research Award, designed to fund high-quality proposals with potential to produce innovative articles for publication in the division journal. This award of up to \$5,000 annually is to be funded with journal reserve surpluses generated by the journal’s subscriptions. The division’s membership voted to establish this award in August 2005. The researcher(s) receive \$2,500 in an initial payment and the final \$2,500 when the research project is completed and a manuscript is submitted to Mass Communication & Society for review. Under the rules of the competition, that journal has first right of publication for any research funded by the grant, although there is no guarantee that the article will be published. (Articles go through the standard review process at the journal.)

The grant competition for 2008 was advertised on the MC&S Web site and in the newsletter. In addition, we promoted the competition in the AEJMC newsletter and on the AEJMC Web site. All submissions were electronic, and submitted to a past head of the division (this year, the committee was run by Jennifer Greer, division head in 2005-2006). Greer verified with AEJMC that those submitting the award were members of the division, as is required under grant competition rules. The submission deadline was May 1. Following the rules set out in the division bylaws, the review committee was composed of the division head (Diana Martinelli), the immediate past head (Marie Hardin), the current editor of Mass Communication and Society (Steve Perry), the immediate past editor (Carol Pardun -- she filled this role for Jim Shanahan, who was unable to participate. Pardun was editor just prior to Shanahan), and an at-large member appointed by the division head (Kevin Williams, chosen as he had won the first research grant competition in 2006).

We received a record number of proposals (20) this year (in previous years the number of submissions had been about 10-15). When the submissions came in, the research chair responded by e-mail to let the researcher know the submission had been received. Because of the number of submissions, we completed a two-tier review process for the first time. The committee chair randomly assigned each member 6 to 7 submissions for a quick review, and asked that each reviewer pick his or her top two based on strength of the proposal in terms of theory and method. After this initial screening, 11 of the proposals had been eliminated because they had not been mentioned by either of the two reviewers that screened them or had been given only one weak "second tier" mention (meaning they fell below the top two but were not noted as a 3rd or 4th choice). The first round of review was complete by May 28. At that point, the committee chair notified the 11 researchers that their proposal was not selected.

For the second round, all committee members reviewed all 9 surviving proposals. The judges were asked to rank the top 3 proposals with 1 being the highest rank. They were also asked to rate each of the top 3 with a score ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 being least fundable and 5 being highly fundable. Judges were asked to take into consideration the strength of the proposal (theory, methods) and the contribution to the field. Finally, the judges were asked to consider the practicality of completing the project in a two-year time frame, as is required under the competition rules. The researchers who authored the nine surviving proposals were notified that their proposals were undergoing further review and that they would be notified by June 16, 2008, of the final selection. Judges returned their ratings and rankings to the chair, who tabulated them and then led an e-mail discussion for the top three proposals.

- The division continued its special call for papers (as noted above), and owing to the election year and the rapid change in communication technology, it was titled New Media and Politics. Number of acceptances was 3. The special paper competition went through the normal judging process and included two of our at-large research paper winners. These papers will be featured at a special panel

session that includes the Internet Critic from the Chicago Tribune and a vice president for digital media at Edelman.

- Another ongoing special competition this year was the Moeller competition, which recognizes top student papers written specifically for a class during the previous year. The papers must be nominated by the professor who taught the class. The top Moeller winner was selected by pulling the highest standardized score designated as a Moeller submission.
- The division also conducted a general research competition for the Midwinter AEJMC Meeting at Point Park University in Pittsburgh Feb. 29-March 1. In that competition, MC&S attracted 30 research abstracts and 2 panel proposal submissions. Of those 30 abstracts, 20 were accepted for an acceptance rate of 66.6%. Both of the panels were accepted; one was a teaching panel co-sponsored with the Visual Communications and Media Management and Economics divisions, called “Communication and society: Trends, challenges, and opportunities” (a response to President Charles Self’s call for such discussions); the other was a PF&R session called “Developing an online community: Art, disability and representation in new media.”

The procedure for this competition was as follows:

- 1) Entrants sent in abstracts or proposals about their research,
- 2) The abstracts were sent to three judges (12 judges total were used, who rated them using the following form):

**2008 AEJMC Mid-Winter Conference  
Mass Communication & Society Division**

**REVIEWER FORM**

Paper #:

Title:

Reviewer #:

**SUMMARY EVALUATION:** considering competence and contribution of the **current** abstract, please check your recommended disposition:

Definitely Reject	Probably Reject	Lean Toward Rejection	Lean Toward Acceptance	Probably Accept	Definitely Accept
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

## **COMMENTS TO AUTHOR(S)**

- 3) Those with the highest total score were programmed.
- 4) Authors were notified via e-mail and mail of acceptance or rejection with the judges' average score and ranking among all submissions noted (rating sheets were not returned, but scores were).

### **10. Convention activities related to research:**

In total, 74 papers were accepted by the MC&S division. These are programmed in the convention in the following sessions:

- **New Media and Politics** (3 papers)
- **A Global Perspective and News** (5 papers)
- **Agenda Setting Revisited: Movement and Effects** (5 papers)
- **Poster Session.** Co-sponsored with Newspaper. (36 papers)
- **Scholar-to-Scholar session** (7 papers)
- **Framing—Not Always a Political Campaign** (4 papers)
- **New Media—Ten Different Perspectives** (High Density session: 10 papers)
- **Gender and Race: Applications and Effects** (4 papers)

### **11. Out-of-convention activities related to research**

This year MC&S out-of-convention activities included (as described in detail above):

- Paper competition for the Midwinter AEJMC Meeting in Pittsburgh
- MC&S Research Award
- Newsletter includes articles addressing topics relevant to MC&S research interests, such as tips for submitting research papers to the convention

### **12. Research Goals and Activities**

This year, the division awarded its third Mass Communication and Society Research Award, an annual \$5,000 cash award to help fund innovative research proposals submitted by division members. Every year, including this one, the division's research activities include publishing a high quality, peer-review journal, *Mass Communication & Society*, and a special call was issued to acknowledge the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Third Person Effect. In addition, the division continued its participation in the AEJMC Midwinter Conference. Additionally, the division sponsored a special research competition for the AEJMC convention and sponsored several research sessions, including a poster session and high density session to accommodate the number of slots needed to approach a 50% acceptance rate.

A consistent research chair and the continuance of the co-chair structure this year helped ensure a smooth electronic research process. The co-chairs also worked throughout the year to recruit the many judges needed to ensure three reviews per submission, and to clarify policies and procedures related to research competitions so that information is recorded and can be followed easily by new officers each year. Goals for next year include continuing the co-chair structure along with continuing to have a separate

research chair for the Midwinter Conference. The work load for the competitions requires several volunteers to keep things running smoothly.

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## TEACHING

### **13. In-convention activities related to teaching.**

The division is sponsoring or co-sponsoring one teaching session in Chicago:

- “Promising Professors Workshop”—Co-sponsored by the Graduate Education Interest Group, MC&S’s annual Promising Professor Competition winners and a Distinguished Educator present their teaching philosophies and methods, relaying how they engage, inspire and motivate students in their classes. Entrants must be solely responsible for at least one class and have five or fewer years of teaching experience. Nominations are taken for the distinguished educator. These presentations all serve to highlight leadership in the field of teaching and inspire other faculty and graduate students to enhance their own classroom performances. Moderators: Frank Dardis, Penn State, and Dan Haygood, Tennessee  
First Place: *Renee Martin-Kratzer, Florida*  
Second Place: *Cindy Royal, Texas State, San Marcos*  
Third Place: *Dominique Brossard, Wisconsin, Madison*  
Distinguished Educator: *Patricia Curtin, Oregon*

### **14. Out-of-convention activities related to teaching**

- One session at the AEJMC Midwinter in Pittsburgh: “Communication and society: Trends, challenges, and opportunities.” Co-sponsored by Media Management and Economics and the Visual Communication divisions. This session included information from professors who are retraining to incorporate multi-media storytelling in their news courses and professionals who discussed the state to the industry and how academics and the profession are evolving and might better work together. Moderator: Diana Martinelli, West Virginia

Panelists:

*Tom O’Boyle, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

*Anne Linaberger, KDKA-TV*

*Larry Dailey, University of Nevada, Reno*

*Bonnie Stewart, West Virginia*

*Dane Claussen, Point Park*

Two pre-convention teaching workshops will take place in Chicago (Tuesday, August 5):

- “Teaching Sports Communication Courses: A Roundtable for Educators”—This session will discuss the changing sports field and how to start or enhance sports communication courses or programs. Moderators: Marie Hardin and Malcolm Moran, Penn State  
Panelists:  
*Dan McGrath, Chicago Tribune*  
*George Solomon, Maryland*



*Scott Reinardy, Kansas*  
*Brad Shultz, Mississippi*  
*Mike Conklin, DePaul*  
*Lisa Burns, Quinnipiac*  
*Marc Krein and Tom Weir, Ohio State*  
*Ron Thomas, Morehouse*  
*Douglas Anderson, Penn State*

- “Using Emerging Technology to Teach Communications: Virtual Worlds, Social Networks, Video Games and Beyond”—Co-sponsored by Communication Technology Division. This workshop will guide participants in using new technologies in the classroom. Moderator: Jennifer Henderson, Trinity; Workshop Leader: Aaron Delwiche, Trinity

### **15. Teaching goals and activities**

- **Participate in the AEJMC Midwinter Conference by preparing and implementing a teaching panel.**

For the fourth consecutive year, the teaching standards committee programmed a teaching panel for the midwinter conference, held this year at Point Park University in Pittsburgh. The panel focused on the changing mass media industries and how academe should and could respond. Approximately 10 people attended the early morning session.

- **Maintain the high level of quality submissions and volunteer participation in the Promising Professors Competition.**

The division’s primary teaching activity, the Promising Professors Competition, is in its eighth year. The 2008 competition was disappointing, in that there were only a half dozen entrants, down substantially from last year. Therefore, only three winners across both graduate student and faculty categories were selected.

Publicity for the competition included articles in the Mass Communication & Society Division newsletter and emails sent to members through the division’s listserv. The committee also worked with the Graduate Education Interest Group to promote the competition to graduate students through GEIG’s listserv. Owing to the much smaller response this year, the division head and the teaching co-chairs have discussed ways to make the competition more visible. This includes branding the competition by developing its own logo; sending direct mail correspondence to deans/directors, as was done in years past; and promoting the competition beyond MC&S members to all of AEJMC. In addition, continued partnering with and enhanced promotion through GEIG for this competition and workshop is recommended to help engage a new generation of professors in the AEJMC.

- **Concentrate attention on educating educators about new technology and the changing media industry.**

The committee continued to develop programs aimed at enhancing pedagogy in the field. The two activities most directly related to this goal were the midwinter teaching

panel on the changing mass media industries (discussed above) and the upcoming pre-conference workshops about sports communication courses and using emerging technologies in the classroom (both also discussed above). Newsletter articles written by members of the committee this year focused on teaching tips from Promising Professors award winners. The continued Promising Professors competition and Distinguished Educator Award highlight those who have been successful teachers early and throughout their careers respectively.

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## **PF&R**

### **16. In-convention activities related to PF&R**

The division is sponsoring or co-sponsoring six PF&R-related conference sessions in Chicago. The sessions for which MC&S is taking the lead appear below, followed by an abbreviated listing of the co-sponsored sessions:

- “Online and Offline Social Networking: Contexts and Applications in the Academy,” co-sponsored by the International Communication Division. This panel will discuss how technology can enhance our work and bring diverse voices to the classroom and academy. Moderator: Amy Schmitz Weiss, University of Texas at Austin  
Panelists:  
*Smeeta Mishra, Bowling Green State*  
*Cindy Royal, Texas State*  
*Itai Himelboim, Minnesota*  
*Catherine Cassara-Jemai and Lara Lengel, Bowling Green State*  
*Jennifer Jacobs Henderson, Trinity.*
- “Solving the Childhood Obesity Epidemic: The Roles of Advertising Regulations and Self-Regulation,” co-sponsored with the Law and Policy Division. Panel includes a Federal Trade Commission consumer protection attorney and the director of the children’s advertising unit of the Council of Better Business Bureaus to examine federal regulation of children’s advertising. Moderator: Ronald Taylor, Tennessee  
Panelists:  
*Keith Fentonmiller, Senior Attorney, Federal Trade Commission*  
*R. Michael Hoefges, North Carolina at Chapel Hill*  
*Carol Pardun, South Carolina*  
*Wayne Keeley, Director, Council of Better Business Bureaus*
- “Challenges of Reporting on Religion in Mass Media: Balancing Accuracy, Representation, and Awareness of Potential Effects,” co-sponsored with Religion and Media Interest Group. Panel will discuss the political and popular opinion effects of religion reporting in the U.S. and includes two Chicago Tribune reporters. Moderator: Michael Longinow, Biola.  
Panelists:

*Piotr Bobkowski, North Carolina at Chapel Hill*  
*Manya Brachear, Chicago Tribune*  
*Guy Golan, Florida*  
*Stephen Perry, Illinois State*  
*Margaret Ramirez, Chicago Tribune*

- “Product Placement in Entertainment Media: Entertainment or Advertainment?,” co-sponsored with Entertainment Studies Interest Group. This session examines the ubiquitous practice of product placement and its social and legal implications. Moderator: David Pierson, Southern Maine.  
Panelists:  
*Matt McAllister, Penn State*  
*John Chapin, Penn State, Beaver*  
*Matthew Killmeier, Southern Maine*  
*Evene Estwick, Wilkes*
- “Contributions of James Carey to the Study of Media and Religion,” Co-sponsored with Religion and Media Interest Group. This panel pays tribute to scholar Jim Carey’s contributions to this lesser known area of communication.
- “Confronting the ‘Hush, Hush; of Online Doctoral Programs: Discussing an Escalating 21<sup>st</sup> Century Paradigm,” co-sponsored with the Public Relations Division. This panel will explore the state of and possible future for online doctoral programs in our field.

### **17. Out-of-convention activities related to PF&R**

- One sole-sponsored session at the AEJMC Midwinter Conference in Pittsburgh: “Developing an Online Community: Art, Disability and Representation in New Media.” Moderator: John Temple – West Virginia  
Panelists:  
*Joel Beeson – West Virginia*  
*Dana Coester – West Virginia*  
*Jessica Rhodes – West Virginia*  
*Michael Costello*

### **18. PR&R Goals and Activities**

The division sought to shed light on PR&R issues through newsletter articles on PF&R topics, including one front-page lead story written by the PF&R co-chair, and also by separately highlighting the scheduled PF&R sessions. The themed research call for the national convention was also on a PF&R topic: the intersection of new media and politics and how political entities are using these new communication technologies. This session involves papers and two panelists, one of whom is the Internet Critic for the Chicago Tribune.

**General Information:**

*19. Please attach copies of the newsletters sent by your group this year, and any other material you wish us to note.*

All three MC&S division newsletters this year are attached (electronically) to this report. Producing our newsletter was a smoother process this year, as we secured an editor who regularly deals with publishing software and publications as part of her professorial work. However, we still experienced a substantial delay in the winter issue's dissemination owing to an error in electronic submission to our AEJMC newsletter contact. This has been acknowledged and corrected. The website and listserv were of great value in notifying members of the newsletter's immediate electronic accessibility and of posting our special calls and nomination announcements. Members are gradually accepting the electronic copy and considering it as a sole option for the newsletter's dissemination, according to the survey administered this year to members. Therefore, this issue will continue to be raised to the membership as an option to save resources, as it has been for the last several years. The continuance of our webmaster from last year provided needed consistency in our website's content, professional appearance, and accessibility. The website's URL is <http://aejmc.net/mcs/>. In addition, the division's research journal, *Mass Communication & Society*, continued to thrive under the editorship of Stephen Perry, who reports to AEJMC's publications committee. There was a 20% increase in submissions in 2008 over 2007, with 180 papers received for review. The acceptance rate is now under 15%, down from about 17% last year. A new ethics code, modeled after JMCQ's, is being developed and will be shared with the journal's editorial board and MC&S membership for approval in Chicago.