

MC & S News

The Newsletter of the Mass Communication & Society Division

Vol. 34, No. 1

Headnote

A capital idea: Get involved in Washington convention planning

Dan Panici

University of Southern Maine

I hope that everyone is enjoying a productive semester. Along with our day-to-day responsibilities, your Mass Communication and Society executive committee is hard at work planning for the 2001 convention in Washington, D.C. Before I share with you the goals we have set for the division, I would first like to draw your attention to what we accomplished during 1999-2000.

After just three years of publication, the *Mass Communication and Society* journal has established itself as a major resource within the mass communication discipline. Institutional subscriptions are on the rise and plans are for the journal to increase its pages per issue. I would like to thank the former editor of *Mass Communication and Society*, David Demers; former head of MC&S, Carol Pardun; and Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. for their dedication and insights associated with the success of the journal.

The Phoenix convention highlights included our annual pre-convention Promising Professors workshop (submissions for this contest were up from last year), seven panel sessions co-sponsored with six different divisions, six research paper sessions (the most of any division), a special call for The Media and The Family research session, a scholar-to-scholar session and an Awards

Luncheon with keynote speaker Gary Hook, Director, Editorial Operations, *USA Today*. Our division owes a thank-you and a "job well done" to the 1999-2000 MC&S Executive Council. Thanks—your diligent and creative work paid off.

The division sponsored a session titled, "You gave me what? How professors grade qualitative projects" at the annual Southeast Regional Colloquium and a Web conference on kids and media hosted by the University of North Carolina and Carol Pardun.

The MC&S Web site is up and running (www.aejmc-mcs.org). Tom Gould has created this site and is looking for feedback on its usefulness. What would you like to see on the site? How can we make it more pertinent for you? Any and all suggestions should be sent to Tom at tgould@ksu.edu.

Much was accomplished and enjoyed last year. I hope that we can continue to move MC&S into a bright and insightful future. So, with the past in mind and an eye on the future, here are the 2000-2001 goals for the division:

To continue to expand the "value added" services at the convention in D.C.

These services will include: programming more research paper sessions than any other division; conducting a special call for The Media and The Family research paper session; planning both Teaching and Professional Freedom and Responsibility pan-

els; creating an Awards Luncheon with a keynote speaker from the profession and conducting our annual Promising Professors contest. If you have any suggestions for how we can best program the convention for the division, please feel free to contact a division officer (see the back of this newsletter).

To recruit more paper judges for our research session submissions.

Our division must begin to look at how we can attract and maintain a roster of judges for the research paper submissions. The month of April, when judges are asked to read the papers, is a busy time for all our members. However, we must address the issue: Given the number of division members (approximately 600), less than 10 percent of the division has volunteered to serve as a judge for the paper competition (and it seems like the same 10 percent volunteer each year). Please forward problem-solving strategies to Dane Claussen, Chair of the Research Committee, at dsc274f@smsu.edu. Better yet, contact Dane and volunteer to serve as a judge for the paper competition.

To examine the division by-laws.

The MC&S division by-laws were adopted on August 27, 1967 and revised on July 26., 1982. We

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Machelle Sayer
U. of North Dakota
First place logo

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A commitment from all levels of higher education institutions is needed to foster inclusivity

Diversity can enhance learning for everybody

Jennifer Greer
Teaching standards co-chair

We hear it from our department chairs and deans, our presidents and chancellors, our governing boards and accrediting bodies — we have to be more sensitive to diversity issues in higher education.

True, universities have made some progress in diversifying our faculties and student bodies with new hiring strategies and recruitment programs. And most schools have developed new courses that deal solely with diversity issues. For example, courses with titles like "Race, Gender and Media" are increasingly found in journalism and mass communications curricula.

But diversity efforts don't need to end there. All instructors, not just those teaching diversity classes, can bring these issues to the forefront in the classroom, sometimes with only minor changes in syllabi, lesson plans and teaching approaches.

Before we can do that, however, we must understand what diversity is and why it's important for university instructors.

Diversity defined

As the emphasis on diversity grows, so does the definition of the concept itself. While diversity once meant dealing solely with differences in gender and ethnicity, it is widely acknowledged that differences in age, social class, culture, backgrounds, religion, learning styles and physical abilities all can influence students' educational needs.

Diversity in the college classroom can enhance learning,

increase student motivation and boost the development of social, cognitive and communication skills students need once they leave the classroom, according to Maria Lynn, writing in the Fall 1998 edition of *College Teaching*. It also helps create a "culture in which we attend to each person for that person's own sake" and allows us to "discover the inner reality of the other, learning about fundamental 'otherness,'" writes John Pfordresher in the September 1991 *Education Digest*.

A commitment to diversity must come from all those involved in higher education — students, instructors and administrators — if it is going to be successful, writes Deborah Flick of the University of Colorado at Boulder.

"Be clear about your motivation for creating an inclusive curriculum," she writes on the university's "Diversity in Teaching and Learning" Web site, available at <http://www.Colorado.EDU/ftsp/support/diversity/div03.html>. "If you're doing it for other than personal and/or scholarly reasons, e.g., approval of your students of color and women students, you might be disappointed. For any number of reasons, your efforts might not be appreciated."

Once you've decided to take the diversity plunge, here are some concrete tips, compiled from the sources listed below:

Concrete advice

• Challenge your own assumptions. Do you assume that everyone is heterosexual unless they're

openly gay? Do you assume that everyone was raised in a two-parent household or celebrates Christmas?

• Review a selection of the printed materials you hand out for class and consciously monitor your lectures and in-class utterances for a week or so. Your assumptions are likely to be clearly visible. When you talk about a couple, do you refer only to those involving a man and a woman? Do you refer to the city's budget director as he and a nurse as she?

• Before any discussion of diversity in the classroom, acknowledge that these are difficult topics to explore. Anticipate that some students may feel threatened or hostile toward such discussions. Work to create an open environment where students are encouraged but not pressured to share information and

feel that all points of view will be welcomed. The UNC "Strategies for Inclusive Teaching" Web site, available at <http://www.unc.edu/depts/ctl/tfi2.html>, suggests the key to establishing a safe classroom atmosphere is to set ground rules for discussion up front. Some guidelines the site suggests: Everyone has a right and an obligation to participate; always listen carefully, with an open mind; ask for clarification; challenge others' ideas with factual evidence and appropriate logic; be willing to change your mind if others demonstrate errors in your logic or use of the facts; above all, avoid ridicule and try to respect beliefs

Help your students, especially those from groups that have been dominant, understand what it means to feel different.



Melissa Mears
University of North Carolina
Second-place logo

Diversity, continued from page 2

of others, even those different from yours.

- Get to know your students. Allow them to tell their stories, not just at the beginning of the semester but throughout the class. Work to help weave these stories to highlight differences and links among the group. Polly McLean, writing on the University of Colorado's diversity Web site available at <http://www.Colorado.EDU/ftp/suport/diversity/div08.html> suggests an awareness assessment in which students are asked the following questions: What is your ethnic background and gender, and what has it meant to be part of those groups? What are the advantages and disadvantages of belonging to your group? Where did you grow up and what other ethnic groups were represented there? What was your first experience feeling different? What are your earliest recollections of being aware of people of different races, physical abilities, sexual orientations and the like? Conclude the exercise with the question: What were your concerns and feelings while answering these questions? McLean says the exercise helps her personalize course content, stimulate class discussion and evaluate the individual student's reality.

- Don't expect students to know everything about their culture or history. An African-American student shouldn't be expected to know any more about the civil rights movement than students from other cultures.

- Likewise, don't presume that a student can represent the point of view of everyone in his or her group. For example, asking a student in a wheelchair to give the disabled point of view or asking a Native American to give the "Indian" point of view assumes that everyone in those groups has the same perspective.

- Bring in guest speakers from a variety of backgrounds, especially those not represented by

the students or instructors in your classroom. But again, make it clear that the guest is not speaking for everyone in his or her group but presenting a perspective shaped by his or her background. Also work to present a variety of viewpoints in films, readings and Web sites and other class materials.

- Help your students, especially those from groups that have been dominant, understand what it means to feel different. Flick outlines the following exercise as a tool for fostering empathy: Ask the students to think about a time they felt different, then write about how those around them treated them. Then ask how those around them could have behaved to make them feel more supported. Have students share these experiences in a non-threatening, small group discussion, then engage in a general class discussion on how to build common ground.

- Work to dispel stereotypes. Flick suggests beginning discussions of cultures, gender and the like by asking students to brainstorm and list stereotypes that they hold or that permeate the culture as a whole. To help facilitate this discussion, ask students to examine specifically where the stereotypes came from, find information that challenges the verity of these ideas and collaborate on creating positive images from the point of view of the group to be examined. Flick recommends. Also, help students become conscious of stereotypes when they come up unprompted in a discussion and, again, examine and work to dispel them.

Sources used and additional diversity resources:

Web sites:

- "Teaching for Inclusion: Diversity in the College Classroom," written and designed by the staff of the Center for Teaching and Learning at the University of North Carolina.

<http://www.unc.edu/depts/ctl/tfi-toc.html>

- "Diversity in Teaching and Learning: Compendium of Good Teaching Ideas," produced by the Faculty Teaching Excellence Program at the University of Colorado at Boulder, <http://www.Colorado.EDU/ftp/suport/diversity/>

Articles and books:

- "Teaching through Diversity," by Maria Lynn. *College Teaching*, Fall 1998, p. 123.

- "How Will Cultural Diversity Affect Teaching," by John Pfordresher. *Education Digest*, September 1991, p. 49.

- "Making the Invisible Visible: Race, Gender, and Teaching in Adult Education," by Angela H. Brown, Ronald M. Cervero, and Juanita Johnson-Bailey. *Adult Education Quarterly*, August 2000, p. 273.

- *Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College and University Teachers*, by Wilbert J. McKeachie. Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath and Co. 9th Edition, 1994. Contains a chapter on "Taking Student Diversity into Account."

- "Promoting Diversity in College Classrooms: Innovative Responses for the Curriculum, Faculty and Institutions," by Maurianne Adams (Ed.). *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*. Winter 1992.

- *Teaching Diverse Populations: Formulating a Knowledge Base*, edited by Etta R. Hollins, Joyce E. King, and Warren C. Hayman. Albany: State University Press of New York. 1994.

- *Multicultural Teaching in the University*, edited by David Schoem, Linda Frankel, Ximena Zuniga, and Edith A. Lewis. Westport, Conn.: Praeger. 1993.



Apiran Raengpradub
Iowa State University
Third-place logo

Active learning, accountability help profs live up to promise

Donica Mensing

Teaching standards co-chair

At the 2000 Promising Professors Workshop in Phoenix, faculty winners Dietram A. Scheufele from Cornell and Patricia Curtin from UNC joined graduate winners Jennifer Jacobs Henderson, Kathleen K. Olson and Kelli S. Burns in sharing teaching tips.

(bits of knowledge) or integrated (putting ideas together.) Theory helps students put knowledge together.

- Use an electronic bulletin board to facilitate student questions about complex readings.

Using active learning

- Give students an original research project and make them accountable to the public for the implementation and outcome of the project.

Scheufele has his students do a public opinion poll about issues identified in the local newspaper. They are responsible for reporting the results of their research in the paper (and then taking the inevitable feedback from readers).

- Active learning exercises are invaluable to students, but creating them takes focused planning and preparation. Henderson recommends the following steps: Set the goal. What do you want them to learn?

Get the facts to prepare the materials. Determine the form. Write a detailed set of instructor's notes for presenting the exercise. Figure out how to

engage students with what they already know. Identify potential problems and what to do about them. Develop a mechanism for student feedback. Create an assessment tool. Ask questions on exams or directly and then use the feedback. But don't ask if you don't want to know.

Teaching inspiration

Invited distinguished educator Dianne Lynch of St. Michael's College wrapped up the session with a pep talk and her thoughts on teaching. Her teaching philosophy? "You get what you give."

She told of taking college classes herself because she believes being a good teacher requires being a good learner and holding ourselves accountable.

Accountability requires assessment, said Lynch, who chairs her department. Schools and departments should be conducting regular exit interviews and departmental assessments. Administrators need to create environments and departmental cultures that value teaching.

Lynch wrapped up the workshop by reminding us that teaching is a privilege.

Interested in applying for a Promising Professor Award?

See page 5 for details.

Highlights

- Use your own research to stimulate your students. Original data can be a perfect impetus for getting students to think.

- Make your students read theory. No matter how unwilling, they need to develop theory-based thinking. It is generalizable, abstract, integrated? It helps students move forward intellectually, even as conditions change.

According to Neuman, all learning is either differentiation

Transfer of funds on MC&S ballot

During the past year, our division gave nearly \$1,000 in award money to members who won the Promising Professors Competition, our Top-Faculty awards and the Moeller Student Research Award. In addition, since we hosted a division luncheon for the first time, we decided to help pay the costs to encourage people to attend.

As a result, our divisional account is very low. Meanwhile, our journal account is robust. This is for two reasons: We moved \$15,000 from the Mass Comm Review account to the Mass Communication & Society account and the journal realized a \$9,000 profit from sales of back issues.

It is the executive committee's feeling that the division should enjoy the benefit of our successful journal, and that we should continue to support our

members with awards and other opportunities throughout the year. **Therefore, the executive committee brings forward this resolution:**

- Move \$3,000 from the Mass Communication & Society journal account into the Mass Comm & Society division account.

We recommend \$3,000 because it will be enough to keep the division financially healthy, but still will allow a cushion for the journal, which will keep us from having to raise membership dues.

Please let us know what you think about this proposal by filling out **the ballot on page 5** and sending it to Division Head Dan Panici at the address provided.

Showcase your teaching talents

Jennifer Greer

Teaching standards co-chair

If you'd like to hear tips from the field's best up-and-coming teachers, plan to attend the Mass Communication and Society Division's Promising Professors pre-conference workshop. Last year, about 50 people participated in the showcase of excellence in teaching that evolved into a lively exchange of ideas.

For those of you wanting to take your involvement a step further and enter the fourth annual Promising Professors competition, read on:

Rules

Both full-time faculty and graduate students are eligible to enter. To be considered for the faculty competition, you must have taught no more than five years as a faculty member. For the graduate student competition, students must have primary responsibility for teaching at least one class. All entrants must be members of the Mass Communication and Society Division. If you're not a member,

contact AEJMC to join. Winners must present at the division's Promising Professor Workshop, which will be held the day before the official start of the 2001 AEJMC convention in Washington, D.C.

Send three copies of a packet containing the following:

- A current vita
- A letter of support from your department chair or dean.
- A brief statement of your teaching philosophy.
- A brief statement of what makes your teaching unique and your assessment of your strengths and weaknesses as an instructor.
- At least two syllabi from classes you have taught within the past two years. Graduate students may send only one if they have not taught more than one class.
- At least two examples of effective assignments used in those classes in the past two years. Examples of assignments from other classes also may be included.
- Other materials that demonstrate teaching creativity.

Procedure

Send materials to Dr. Jennifer Greer, MC&S teaching standards co-chair, Reynolds School of Journalism, MS 310, University of Nevada-Reno, Reno, NV 89557. Entries must be postmarked no later than March 16, 2001. E-mail entries will not be accepted. All entries will be acknowledged but not returned. At least two judges will review each entry. Winners will be notified no later than May 10.

The payoff

Three faculty winners and two graduate student winners will be selected. Prizes in the faculty category are as follows: First place \$250; second place, \$100; third place, \$50. The graduate student winners will receive \$50 each. All winners will appear as panelists in the pre-conference workshop at the AEJMC annual conference.

**Share your
research**

**Southeast Colloquium
deadline is
December 8**

Details on page 6

Should \$3,000 be moved from the MC&S journal account into the MC&S division account?

(See story on page 4.)

- Yes, I support moving \$3,000 from the MC&S journal account into the MC&S division account.
- No, I do not support moving \$3,000 from the MC&S journal account into the MC&S division account.

Send completed ballot to:

Dan Panici, Division Head
University of Southern Maine
Media Studies Program, Department of Communication
Portland, ME 04103

Internet uses and gratifications: Understanding motivations for using the Internet

Hanjun Ko

Doctoral Student
University of Florida

The Internet is no longer considered a communication medium for only a certain group of people. Considering numerous revolutionary changes caused by the Internet, it is natural that the medium has become a popular scholarly subject for researchers in mass communication. Under such circumstance, my major interest was in why and how people use the Internet. Moreover, I was also interested in why people choose a certain type of Web site to visit among the innumerable and diverse selections from the Internet.

For these reasons, the main objective of my study was to examine the motives of Internet usage and the relationship with certain types of Web sites as well as attitudes toward the Internet. The major theoretical framework of this study was the uses and gratifications theory because psychological and behavioral dimensions involving mediated communication have been effectively explained by this theory.

In the spring semester of 2000, I took a seminar class, "Mass Communication and Public Opinion," taught by Dr. Michael

F. Weigold. In this class, I learned about several approaches of attitudes and persuasions in mass communication and developed a personal research project related with "attitudes." Therefore, I attempted to explain which motivational factors of Internet usage are associated with a certain type of Web sites and how these motivational factors explain the attitudes toward the Internet.

I also investigated differences among heavy, medium and light users of the Internet in terms of the key aspects of Internet usage. The original data for this study were collected via self-report questionnaire, and the study sample consisted of 196 students at the University of Florida. For the survey sample, I considered the college students acceptable due to the fact that this group represents a significant portion of the Internet population.

My first research hypothesis concerned the predictive utility of the Internet usage motivation variables for explaining the attitude toward the Internet. As a result, I found out that the use of the Internet is more inclined toward the instrumental orientation than ritualistic orientation. That means the Internet is still more considered as "information provider" than "entertainment

provider" at this period of time.

On the other hand, the result also showed the significant correlations between the Information motivation and the Information types of Web sites and between the Pass Time motivation and the Entertainment types of Web sites as expected. Finally, the results revealed that heavy Internet users have a higher level of motivation in using the Internet as well as a more positive attitude toward the Internet and they are more active and more goal-directed in choosing a certain Web site to visit than light users.

Despite some limitations, I tried to understand several aspects of Internet usage in this study. Considering that the Internet is one of the fastest-developing media, studies about a variety of users' motivations for specific types of Web sites and specific contents should be continued in the future. I believe that further research that challenges the developing nature of mediated communication will provide better answers to understand the process and effects of mass communication in the future.

Hanjun Ko was the winner of the 2000 Moeller Award given by the division for the best student paper written for a class or seminar.

Columbia to host 2001 Southeast Colloquium

Columbia, S.C. March 8-10, 2001

PAPER DEADLINE: Received by noon, Friday, December 8, 2000 (Papers may not be faxed or e-mailed.)

FOR INFORMATION, contact Pat McNeely or Pat Jackson, College of Journalism and Mass Communications, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C. 29208

• Pat McNeely (803) 777-3303
mcneely2000@yahoo.com

• Pat Jackson (803) 777-6973
pat.jackson@usc.jour.sc.edu

RULES FOR SUBMITTING PAPERS

Please send:

See SOUTHEAST, Page 7

Copy deadline

If you are interested in contributing to this newsletter, the copy deadline for the next edition is January 15. Maybe you have an interesting book you read for research, teaching, or fun that you'd like to review. Contact editor John Beatty (see page 8) for more information.



SOUTHEAST, Continued from Page 6

• a (maximum) 250-word abstract

• three blind copies (Only the title of the paper and the division for which it is intended should appear on the cover pages of the three blind copies.)

• one original copy, which includes the name, title, affiliation, address, office phone, home phone, fax, e-mail addresses of all authors and the division for which the paper is intended.

Categories are History, Law, Magazine or Newspaper, Open and Bicentennial, a special category celebrating the 200th anniversary of the University of South Carolina. Authors may submit papers in any and all divisions. However, a paper may not be submitted simultaneously in two or more divisions. Papers must be received by noon December 8, 2000.

Authors who include a self-addressed, stamped postcard will be notified that their papers arrived safely. Authors should be notified whether their papers have been accepted by Monday, Jan. 23, 2001. Judges' comments will be mailed to authors as soon as possible by the research chairs. At least one author must register and attend the Southeast Colloquium to present the paper.

Reservations should be made at the Clarion Town House in Columbia, S.C., by Feb. 1, 2001 to guarantee the \$66 single and \$72 double (plus 10 percent tax) rate (which includes the daily buffet breakfast). Breakfast is not provided for anyone who does not



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stay at the host hotel. Registration is \$80 until March 1, 2001, which includes the opening reception, two luncheons and breaks. After March 1, registration is \$100. No refunds will be made after March 1. Call 1-800-277-8711 to register for rooms. When our block of rooms is gone, room rates will be higher. Free shuttle service to and from the Columbia Metropolitan Airport (CAE) is available for guests of the hotel.

Call your flight schedule to the Clarion Town House Hotel at 1-800-277-8711 to make a shuttle reservation. Information can be found at <http://www.aejmc.org/region/>. The registration form can be mailed to Pat McNeely/Pat Jackson, College of Journalism and Mass Communications, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C. 29208 or faxed to (803) 777-0553 or (803) 777-4103.

Research chairs are:

History

Ann Colbert, Journalism
Neff Hall 343, IPFW
Fort Wayne, IN 46805
(219) 481-6685
COLBERT@ipfw.edu

Magazine

Dane Claussen
Southwest Missouri State

University
901 S. National Ave.
Springfield, MO 65804
(417) 836-8719
dsclaussen@hotmail.com

Newspaper

Ann Brill
School of Journalism
University of Kansas
2051 Dole Center
Lawrence, KS 66045
(785) 864-7656
ABrill@ukans.edu

Law

Roy Moore
Associate Dean for
Graduate Studies
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106 Grehan Building
University of Kentucky
Lexington, KY 40506-0042
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Open

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Attn: Southeast Colloquium
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have been operating, or failing to operate, by division by-laws for 18 years. I have been a member of the MC&S Executive Committee for five years and this the first time that I have seen the by-laws.

It is time for our division to examine the by-laws to determine what has been working and what should be revised so the by-laws better reflect our experiences. I am asking that three division members contact me so the four of us can serve as an ad hoc committee to examine the by-laws.

☛ To increase division participation on standing committees (Research, Teaching, and PF&R).

As you peruse the names and addresses of the chairs and co-chairs of the MC&S standing committee, consider the following: Can we have a committee without committee members? Each of the Chairs and Co-chairs is in the process of recruiting committee members.

Working on a committee is a wonderful way to experience the "behind the scenes" of program planning.

Call one of them up and volunteer for a committee—you never know, you may one day wake up as the Head of MC&S.