

AEJMC Programming: Secrets Revealed

By Jennifer Jacobs Henderson
Trinity University
Vice Head

The process for programming the AEJMC national convention always seemed to me to be much like the magical mystery show that went along with the bad spaghetti served at my favorite restaurant when I was a kid. I knew it wasn't really magic, but I had no idea how it worked. When I became a programming chair for another division two years ago, I learned the secrets behind the planning. And, while I'm afraid to say there is no secret handshake, there is a whole lot that goes on behind the scenes. So, here it is. AEJMC Programming—Secrets Revealed:

Each year, the programming chairs (usually the vice head) of each division (there are 17) and interest group (there are 10) send out calls for panel proposals to their membership. These panel ideas,

along with ones submitted by officers, are edited into a standard format and submitted to the central office. Each division and interest group is encouraged to submit no more than five or six panel proposal ideas. The central office then combines all of these proposals into one enormous document containing almost 200 proposals that all of the programming chairs download.

Then the negotiations begin in earnest. AEJMC encourages programming chairs to co-sponsor panels with other divisions and interest groups whenever possible. This allows for more cooperative and diverse programming. When a panel or mini-plenary session is co-sponsored at the national convention, a division or interest group need only "spend" ½ of a chip (think poker or potato). When a panel is sponsored solely by a division or interest group, one chip is required. All pre- and post-conference panels are

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HEAD NOTE

Celebrating our past, looking to the future

Division to conduct fall survey

The AEJMC Convention in Washington, D.C. last August was the most attended convention to date, and the Mass Communication & Society Division contributed greatly with some 18 solely or co-sponsored activities, including workshops; an off-site tour; panels comprised of leading journalists; and of course research paper posters, panels and presentations.

We gave away more than \$6,000 in research awards and prizes and Promising Professor teaching awards (see related stories on pp. 2 and 4). And we celebrated our division's 40th anniversary, where we acknowledged current award winners and such early division leaders as Ed Traves and Del Brinkman, who called MC&S "the backbone" and the "heart and soul" of AEJMC.

With some 560 members, representing every state and 30 countries, such descriptors are apt. Our journal is financially strong and growing (see story on p. 6), and we're already making plans for next year's convention in Chicago.

SEE "HEAD NOTE," P. 3



Diana Knott Martinelli, West Virginia, Head

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Successful Paper Competitions and Research Sessions in D.C.

Research Co-chairs

By Janet Bridges

Sam Houston State

Shahira Fahmy

Southern Illinois

Our division had a very good research year. The division received 137 research papers in three competitions: (1) the annual Moeller competition for student papers completed as part of a class, (2) the annual special call titled “Covering Religion and Politics: Morality, Media Frames and Public Opinion” and (3) the general research call for faculty and student papers. We accepted 72 papers for a 52.5 percent acceptance rate.

The result was five diverse and exciting research sessions: the special call; “Politics, News and the Outcomes”; “On-Line Media: Uses and Effects”; “What Are They Saying and Why Are They Saying It? News Frames, Antecedents, and Effects”; and “Media Health Information: Not for Women Only.” We also had 39 presenters in our joint poster session with the Newspaper Division and another 10 in the general Scholar-to-Scholar session.

Fuyuan and I send special thanks to our reviewers, our moderators and our discussants, who gave generously of their time to make this year’s competition the success it was. You are critical to our success. For those of you who

had problems with the AEJMC on-line system, we have made suggestions and expect a smoother competition next year.

Now that we thank you, we ask you to help again. Shahira and I will be asking for volunteers to judge the 2008 competition. We will greatly appreciate it if you can help us. Please make sure you have not submitted a paper to our division if you serve as a MC&S paper judge. We will try to make certain that each paper is evaluated by three reviewers. If the number of papers remains the same—137 papers—we need 411 sets of eyes. If each judge is able to review the maximum of 5 papers, we need 83 volunteers.

Paper and Panel Call for Midwinter Conference

By Donnalyn Pompper

Temple

Midwinter Research Chair

Research paper abstracts, paper judges and panel session ideas are sought for the 2008 AEJMC Midwinter Conference, Feb. 29 to March 1. Hosted by Point Park University in Pittsburgh, the conference will include 10 participating divisions or interest groups.

Research paper abstracts of about 500 words must be submitted. The abstract should give a clear sense of the scope of the research, its relevant hypotheses and/or research questions and the method of inquiry. Conclusions should be highlighted for works that have been completed by the submission deadline. However, do not submit full papers to the paper chairs; only abstracts are required to be considered for presentation at the Midwinter Conference.

Panel proposals should include a panel title, a 300- to 500-word description of the session’s focus, and a list of potential or confirmed panelists, including their university affiliations.

Authors whose abstracts are accepted must submit complete research papers, not exceeding 30 pages, to their

assigned discussant two weeks prior to the conference.

Papers presented at this conference also are eligible for presentation at the national AEJMC convention. Authors are encouraged to use the feedback from reviewers and other Midwinter Conference attendees to improve upon and finalize works in progress for submission to the national convention.

MC&S paper abstracts and panel proposals are due by Dec. 7 to Donnalyn Pompper at dpompper@temple.edu. Abstracts and proposals should be submitted in a standard word processing file. Authors will be notified by Jan. 10, 2008.

Panel and paper abstracts should include two files each: 1) one file with a title page that identifies the paper’s author(s) or panel’s organizer(s) – including mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address of the person to whom inquiries about the submission should be addressed; 2) another file that has the abstract or proposal without the identifying information.

Conference accommodation details will be forthcoming. Visit the MC&S Web site at <http://aejmc.net/mcs/> to learn more.

The History of the Promising Professors Competition

Daniel Haygood

Tennessee

Teaching Co-chair

When Michel Haigh of Penn State University accepted her first place award in the faculty division of the Most Promising Professors competition this past August in Washington, D.C., it marked the tenth time the Mass Communication & Society Division has recognized outstanding teaching. AEJMC's largest division has been dedicated to honoring promising new professors through this competition held each year at the annual AEJMC conference.

The original inspiration for the competition came from Carol Pardun, the current director of the Journalism School at Middle Tennessee State University and vice president of AEJMC. When Pardun began serving as the division's teaching standards chair in 1995, she realized that while the division was well known for its support of scholarly research, there was a real area of opportunity to highlight and honor teaching.

"We wanted to do something that rewarded and recognized new teachers who showed great promise," said Pardun. This distinguished competition was originally created for the purpose of honoring outstanding potential for teaching among those just starting their careers. The competition placed emphasis on teaching innovation, creativity, and excellence.

Pardun stated that the division takes pride in placing importance

on scholarship and teaching, striking a balance that she thinks reflects an ideal in higher education. Echoing this sentiment, Kathy McKee, current interim provost of Berry College and former division teaching standards chair stated, "Good scholarship informs teaching. Good teaching informs scholarship."

The initial competition, then called "Great Professors" was held in Baltimore at the 1998 AEJMC conference. From the start, the competition was divided into two divisions: (1) new instructors and faculty with no more than five years of teaching full time, and (2) graduate teaching assistants who have primary teaching responsibilities for at least one class.

Perhaps the highlight of the competition is the actual Promising Professors session, held during the AEJMC conference, providing an ideal platform for sharing ideas and tips for improving teaching. Several winners, including the top faculty and top graduate assistant, make presentations about their teaching philosophies and practices. In addition, a distinguished educator is honored and asked to speak to the gathering. Pardun stated that the division has been fortunate over the years because the honored scholar has always embodied the division's focus on both great teaching and great scholarship.

To compete, entrants are required to send in a package of teaching materials and letters of recommendation, supporting their teaching performance. Three faculty winners and two graduate teaching assistant winners are selected.

HEAD NOTE

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If you've got ideas for panels, we'd love to hear them (see story on p. 2).

However, in addition to turning toward next year's gathering, we've also been asked to reflect upon the future of our mass media professions as well. Our new AEJMC President, Charles Self, has charged all of the divisions and interest groups to engage in this reflection of and dialogue about our respective professions' futures and what we think it will look like in the near term and beyond. He's asked us to report our ideas and discussions back to the AEJMC Board of Directors. The information obtained will be considered in terms of AEJMC's new strategic plan.

To satisfy this charge, we will be developing a brief MC&S member survey this fall and asking you, via the listserv, to take a few moments to share your thoughts with us. We also hope to lead a panel discussion at the Midwinter Conference at Point Park in March (see story on p. 2). If you're interested in contributing to this panel, please let me know.

The survey will be short, but it will lay the groundwork for our understanding of current members' interests and views regarding our rapidly changing media and societal landscape. Thanks in advance for your time on this effort. We'll look forward to hearing from you.

Award-winning Teachers Offer Tips in D.C.



By Frank Dardis
Penn State
Teaching Co-chair

Last August in Washington, D.C., winners of the MC&S Division's Distinguished Educator Award and Promising Professors competition shared the strategies and philosophies they employ in making teaching an adventure-some and rewarding experience for both them and their students.

“Actually Teaching”

Pamela Shoemaker of Syracuse University, this year's Distinguished Educator, explained that she—like many of us—began her teaching career with many misconceptions, including the assumption that all students are self-motivated, follow instructions, complete projects on time, and do “A” work. She also said that when she began her career, she perceived teaching as being comprised simply of talking, assigning, and grading.

This led to some disappointments, she said, which included a feeling that she was dealing with mediocre students. Again, turning the critical eye inward, Shoemaker assessed her own performance and realized that perhaps she was being a mediocre instructor, and the blame perhaps did not fall entirely upon the students.

So, she changed her philosophy to develop some solutions. The first of these involves what Shoemaker referred to as the “scary syllabus” in which “everything” is laid out in excruciating detail from day one, from due dates, policies, and expected style on written assignments to

discussion questions for each of the reading assignments. In addition, Shoemaker creates each of her many handouts, thereby maintaining full control over all course content. Further, she ensures that all this information is available right from the beginning to avoid ambiguity regarding what is expected of students and what is expected of her.

Lastly, Shoemaker explained some specific strategies in teaching students how to write, which she believes is a cornerstone in mass communication education. She recommended that research papers be handed in incrementally, with each section meticulously critiqued along the way. An important caveat she offered was that students imitate what they read or see, so it is crucial for faculty to provide as much feedback as possible, whether in painstakingly written critiques, lengthy discussions in the office, or however else. Thus, she concluded, “actually teaching” is much more than simply “telling” students what to do; it really is about “showing” them what to do.

“Making My Students Better”

Michel Haigh of Penn State University, the first-place winner of the Promising Professors competition, began by saying that her main goal was to make her students better employees than she was when she entered the job market. Her philosophy includes the belief that learning has greater significance when students discover something on

their own, rather than having someone simply dictate information to them.

Based on this outlook, Haigh believes that three key elements shape her typical course: preparation, taking learning outside the classroom, and a relaxed teaching style. Echoing Shoemaker that “some students tell me that they are scared of my syllabus,” Haigh believes that proper preparation and providing a clear understanding of what students should expect sends an early message to students that success in the course is their responsibility. However, she does complement this tone with a flexible, relaxed teaching style that, paradoxically, would not be realized if she were not so prepared. Finally, Haigh stresses the importance of learning outside the classroom by assigning work for actual outside clients in her campaigns courses, as well as making herself as available as possible to students all hours of the day.

“Active Engagement”

Daniel Haygood, University of Tennessee, was awarded second place in the Promising Professors competition. His philosophy of “active engagement” includes the view that teachers: 1) should have enthusiasm for the subject matter, 2) should create an environment for learning through the creative presentation of up-to-date, relevant material, and 3) are stakeholders in students' learning and should be held accountable for results.

Specifically, Haygood identified three challenges that professors must overcome to keep the class fresh and evolving while keeping the professor sharp. The first entails “shrinking” a large class size to create a smaller college environment that is more conducive to learning. He said that student bio sheets and small-group exercises have helped him overcome this challenge. Second, to pique student interest, Haygood said that he tries to “internationalize” his advertising courses whenever possible by making international subjects and examples “an everyday thing.” Lastly, he said that he constantly tries to intrigue students by surprising them with “the unexpected” by “mixing it up” through providing various examples of interesting products or ads and scheduling top-drawer guest speakers.

“Be Your (Passionate) Self”

Daniel Reimold of Ohio University, first-place winner of the Gradu-



(L-R) Wendy Wyatt, Laura Triplett, Daniel Reimold, Michel Haigh, Pamela Shoemaker, Terri Ann Bailey, Daniel Haygood.

ate Student competition, said that his ultimate teaching purpose is to instill among his students the sense of passion that he has for teaching, regardless of the professional field they pursue. To do this, his single most significant rule-of-thumb is to strive to connect the reporting and editing he teaches to students’ professional aspirations. A fun exercise he has developed along the way is to – without prior warning – make the classroom as noisy and chaotic as possible during in-class writing assignments, thereby imitating the work environment of a real newsroom. Ultimately, Reimold believes that teach-

ers should embrace the positive aspects that others may perceive in them, and should not try to pretend to be someone they’re not.

“Encourage/
Facilitate Participation”

Terry Ann Bailey of the University of North Carolina was awarded

SEE “TIPS,” P. 8

Graduate Student Greetings



**By Andrea
H. Duke
Alabama
Graduate Student
Liaison**

Hello again graduate students!

I am very excited to serve my second year as the graduate liaison for AEJMC’s Mass Communication & Society Division. I hope most of you attended the annual conference in Washington, D.C., where graduate students had a great showing in our nation’s capital. So what is next? There are so many exciting events happening in AEJMC this school year. First, there is the Midwinter Conference (February 29-March 1) at Point Park University in Pittsburgh. See p. 2 for submission details. Then, there is the Southeast Colloquium (March 13-15) at Auburn University. Lastly, the annual conference is scheduled for August 6-9 in Chicago. Calls for papers will be posted soon, with the deadline in early April 2008. More information on all of these events can be found on both the AEJMC and MC&S web pages.

For those on the job market, the AEJMC website has revamped their online job postings, allowing you to search by state or academic interest. Also, if you are curious about the different publications associated with AEJMC or the different divisions, look under the “About” and “Scholarship” tabs online for more information.

I urge each of you to submit papers to the Midwinter Conference, Southeast Colloquium, and annual conference. The AEJMC conferences allow you to present your research, as well as learn about others’ insights in the mass communication field. More so, these conferences allow you to meet scholars in your field that you read in your classes and talk with them on a casual level.

If you have any questions, problems, or suggestions, do not hesitate to email me at andreaduke1@gmail.com. And again, welcome to the MC&S Division.

AEJMC... CONTINUED FROM P. 1

“free.” In addition to research, panels are also programmed for the convention at the same Midwinter meeting. Each division gets four “free” time slots for programming research sessions. For the 2008 convention, all divisions (plus the Council of Affiliates, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Community College Journalism Association) will have 7 chips to use in programming, and interest groups will have 3 ½ (unless selected that year as a participant in a bizarre scheme that takes one chip away from divisions and ½ chip away from interest groups on a rotating basis to accommodate new groups).

As soon as programming chairs are notified that all of the panel proposals are available for download, the e-mails begin to fly. “Would you like to co-sponsor this panel?” “Would you like to sponsor a mini-plenary session?” Many deals are struck. For example, “if you co-sponsor our panel on “x,” we will co-sponsor your panel on “y.”

With luck (and quick e-mail responses), the programming chair has all of the allotted chips reserved for sessions by the time they reach the Midwinter planning session the first week in December.

Next, all of the division and interest group heads and programming chairs descend on a hotel in a (usually) centrally located city (this year in St. Louis). On Friday night, over an elaborate dessert buffet, the final negotiations take place. Here, previously made programming plans are confirmed, rejected or (sometimes) forgotten. Many calories later, each programming chair has in his/her hand a plan for the chip auction the next day.

Saturday morning, very early, all of the heads and programming chairs meet in a hotel ballroom. Chairs (two for

each division and interest group) are set around a series of tables that make an enormous square (sometimes rectangle). In the center is a big bowl (for no real purpose but sport). At each pair of chairs is a placard with the name of the division or interest group and an envelope containing poker chips. Now, here’s the confusing part: each chip is not worth a chip. It is worth a ½ chip. And, the value does not change no matter what color the chip (this can be more confusing than craps the first time at the table).

To make things fair, the first selection goes to the division or interest group whose name is drawn from...something nearby. That division or interest group then must announce: 1) the day, 2) the time slot, 3) the co-sponsor, and 4) the kind of panel programmed. The lead sponsor (and any co-sponsors) then toss a poker chip (not worth one chip, mind you, but ½ a chip) in the general direction of the large bowl. About two or three lucky programming chairs get their chip in the bowl and win nothing (but a round of hoots and applause from the others trapped in the room). This process continues around the table in a series of rounds (each beginning with a different division or interest group) until all the time slots are filled and all the panels programmed. This usually takes three or four hours, sometimes more (no kidding).

The programming chairs then return back to their respective colleges and universities, exhausted, but eager to write a follow-up article for their division or interest group newsletter. And, if everything goes well, the following August everyone attends a well-organized, intellectually stimulating convention.

Mystery revealed.

Changes Taking *Mass Communication & Society* Forward

By Lindsey Michalski & Stephen Perry, *Editor*,
Southern Illinois

Electronic submissions, a new editorial assistant, a special symposium call for papers, a guest editor, and a new publisher headline recent progress for *Mass Communication & Society (MCS)* as Stephen Perry completes his first year since the transition from the editorship of James Shanahan began.

For approximately six months, the

journal has been receiving all submissions through the ScholarOne® system at mc.manuscriptcentral.com/mcas. This process has made journal editing more efficient in many ways, and the new editorial assistant, Lauren Bridgeman, is becoming adept at helping work through technological hurdles with the system.

Lauren is an MA student at Illinois State. She completed her bachelor’s degree in broadcast journalism at Hampton University. Lauren will

help to promote the journal contents to the media and correspond with authors frequently.

Journal submissions are strong. In the last 12 months, 132 original research manuscripts were submitted to the journal; 42 in 2006 and 90 thus far in 2007. The acceptance rate is 17 percent.

A special call for manuscripts on Third-Person Effects (IPE) theory has been issued by guest editor, Dr. Stephen Banning of Bradley University (See below). That call is also available on the

division website at <http://aejmc.net/mcs>. The call is designed to create a symposium of landmark articles that will honor the 25th anniversary of the theory.

Dr. Banning was selected as the special editor for this symposium because of his strong experience working with TPE. He has published at least 11 articles on the theory including an article in Volume 4 of *MCS*.

MCS is published quarterly

by Taylor and Francis Group, which purchased Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Currently, the Group has offices in eight countries and publishes over 1000 journals and 1800 books.

To submit an original manuscript or book review to *MCS*, visit <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/mcas>. Information and qualifications for submission are readily available on the website.

AEJMC News Available via Text Messaging

Division Blogger Sought

By Diana Martinelli

West Virginia
Division Head

A number of new services, including text messaging and division/group blogs are being offered by AEJMC. The services are being spearheaded by Public Relations Director Mich Sineath.

AEJMC NOW gives you the latest AEJMC updates to your cell phone, without the annoyance of daily updates, said Sineath. It will involve “only the important stuff: voting results, convention updates, special announcements. . . .”

To set up your free account:

1. Go to www.twitter.com
2. Click on “Join for Free!”
3. Follow the steps to create your account.
4. Activate your phone in Twitter.

How does one do this?

1. Log in to your Twitter account.

2. Click the Settings link at the top.
3. Click Phone&IM.
4. Enter your phone number in the field provided.
5. Wait for the verification code and text that code to Twitter at phone number 40404. International members should text the verification code to +44 7781 488126.

To get AEJMC News delivered to your phone, text the words “Follow AEJMC” to phone number 40404.

Also, each division and interest group now has a section on the AEJMC Membership Forum for its own blog. If you are interested in serving as the MC&S blogger, please contact division head Diana Martinelli. For technical questions about the text messaging service or the blogs, contact Sineath at aejmcpr@aol.com.

CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

Mass Communication & Society

“Symposium on Third-Person Effects”

Manuscripts are solicited for publication in a special “Symposium on Third-Person Effects” issue of *Mass Communication & Society* focusing on the third-person perception and third-person effect.

We invite rigorous, high quality articles that further the theory, meta-analysis and serious discussion pieces synthesizing previous research, and proposals for new directions of study. Discussion pieces might want to consider questions such as: How does the third-person effect/perception fit into larger communication theories? What new vistas does the behavioral aspect open? How much of an impact does the third-person effect really have on society? What impact besides censorship may the third-person effect have on society? Can qualitative research ever be used in conjunction with the third-person effect? Are current methods of measurement sufficient to reflect all nuances of the third-person effect?

The intent is to identify synthesis articles on possible topics including:

- *Landmark Studies*
- *Applications / Value of Theory*
- *Meta Analysis*
- *Theory Synthesis*
- *Directions for Future*

All manuscripts will be submitted as regular original manuscripts for review on the MC&S online submission location. Please designate that you are submitting for the “Symposium on Third-Person Effects.” The deadline for submissions is February 1, 2008. If you have questions, please contact guest editor Stephen A. Banning at sbanning@bradley.edu.

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TIPS... CONTINUED FROM P. 5

second place in the Graduate Student competition. Her approach to teaching involves maximizing in-class participation to produce a more comfortable learning atmosphere. She provided many useful tips on how she encourages such behavior, including randomly pairing students the first day of class and having them interview each other, getting students to meet others in the class to create a sense of community, structuring class time to include much discussion, and using participation grades as an incentive to speak. The bottom line, Bailey said, was that such efforts “pay off in active learning, keeping the atmosphere interesting and vibrant, and ultimately positive student evaluations” of the discussion-based components of the class.

NOTE: Laura Triplett of California State-Fullerton and Wendy Wyatt of the University St. Thomas both tied for third place in the Promising Professors competition but did not make a presentation at the session.

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