



# Newsletter

**Vol. 51, Issue 1**  
**Fall 2017**

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## A Message from the Division Head



**by Melanie  
Sarge, MCS  
Division  
Head**

I am excited to begin this 2017/2018 academic year as the new Division Head of MCS. First, I want to thank reviewers, moderators, panelists, officers, and attendees for your assistance in making the 2017 Annual Conference in Chicago a success. Planning is already underway for next year's programming (for more information, see the Vice Head's column) and I appreciate all of those who have already offered to help. I encourage all members (faculty, professionals and graduate students) to get involved in making next year's Annual Conference in D.C. even better. Feel free to contact me if you have any new ideas for the Conference or the Division or if you simply want to get involved and don't know how.

Before we look too far into the future, I'd like to share a couple important updates and ask that you focus your attention

and excitement toward the upcoming Midwinter Conference. This August the MCS Division underwent AEJMC Assessment, which occurs for each division and interest group every five years. The Assessment Committee was very pleased with the state of our Division and encouraged us to continue doing what we're doing. Additionally, they provided suggestions that will serve as our goals for this upcoming year. We plan on (1) forming a subcommittee that will brainstorm ideas on how best to use MCS funds to support research conducted by members (2) determining a more formal process by which MCS Officers move up the chain of leadership and (3) improving communication regarding opportunities MCS provides members to increase paper submissions, award applications and attendance at conference sessions, events and meetings.

In addition, during the 2017 Annual Conference, together with the MCS Journal Editor and professor at Penn State, Dr. Fuyuan Shen, the past Head and I began the process of renewing the *Journal's*  
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## \$20,000 in Awards Available to MCS Members

We would like to make you aware of the many awards MCS has to offer! In addition to the three cash awards given to the Division's top winners of each conference research paper competition 1) Open Competition 2) Student Competition and 3) Moeller Student Paper Competition—MCS offers around \$20,000 in awards recognizing members for their hard work in research, teaching and service. We encourage you to visit the awards section of the MCS Website (<http://aejmc.us/mcs/>). Here, you will find detailed descriptions for each award as well as lists of the requirements in order to determine if you are eligible to apply. Due dates for submissions are still being updated on the website but if you have any questions, send one of the award chairs an email and they will be happy to pass along the necessary information. All applications or nominations for any of our awards should be emailed to Robert McKeever ([robert.mckeever@sc.edu](mailto:robert.mckeever@sc.edu)), Fan Yang ([fyang@albany.edu](mailto:fyang@albany.edu)) or Juan Liu ([j.liu30@csuohio.edu](mailto:j.liu30@csuohio.edu)). Begin thinking about these awards early and take advantage of the unique opportunities the MCS Division offers!

## Communications Committee Report



by **Jack V. Karlis,**  
**Communications Chair/  
Social Media Chair**  
and  
**Shana J. Meganck,**  
**Communications**  
**Associate Chair**



The Social Media Committee's role is to utilize, maintain, create and recruit for the Division's social media accounts to raise awareness of the Mass Communication and Society Division. Jack Karlis of Georgia College and Shana J. Meganck of James Madison are the officers in charge of the committee.

As of March 2017, there were 752 members on Facebook, 1,993 followers on Twitter, 29 followers on Instagram and 1,022 members on LinkedIn. The committee seeks continued growth and participation from MCS members in spreading the news about our Division. If you have any news to share or have not yet joined, we encourage you to do so. Please share, retweet, link or repost Division information on your own personal accounts to help diffuse information.

### #MCS17

Our social media campaign and contest performed remarkably well at the AEJMC Annual Conference in Chicago. Participants answered trivia questions on our Facebook page about the history of MCS, AEJMC and Chicago. We awarded 15 winners with MCS-imprinted Bluetooth speakers at the well-attended MCS Social. Bluetooth speakers were also awarded to the top individual attendee using the #MCS17 hashtag for panels, presentations, social events and other gatherings. Next year, the tradition will continue. Check our Facebook page for all the winners in Chicago.



### Being Social

Often we recognize names as lines in the Conference program, but fail to connect names with faces of our fellow MCS Division members. We are the largest division in AEJMC, and it's easy to forget the human element of our members and the lives we lead both inside and outside academia. Social media is for sharing who we are by being social. In an effort to become a little smaller in a big division and become more of a community, we are asking our members to utilize our Facebook page to share the following types of information:

- Births of little MCS members in training
- Hires of MCS members
- Announcements of Tenure and Promotion
- News about our field, especially subjects pertaining to mass communication and society

Thank you in advance for sharing your news!

MCS Bluetooth speakers were awarded to trivia contest winners at Annual Conference.

## Graduate Student Mentorship



by **Torie Fowler,**  
**Graduate Student**  
**Liaison Chair**

Having a great mentor is something we can all agree has the capability to either hurt

or help the graduate school experience. Having someone to ask questions to, bounce ideas off of, or simply receive life advice from allows a student to feel appreciated and on the right track. Most divisions host a mentorship program that is initiated during Annual Conference, where mentor and mentee have coffee in a boardroom and say hello at a social event one evening. Distance and research interests could both play a part in how that relationship evolves over the course of the next year.

We all search for innovative ways to engage our students and to participate in active learning. Why are we not seeking unique ways to do the same when it comes to mentorship programs? The meet and talk once a year method has to end. What are some out-of-the-box ways you have participated in mentorship programs over the years? As a mentor, what are some ideas that you can think of to build better relationships with your mentee? If you are a mentee, what would you like to see from a mentor?

Graduate students need mentors. We actually want mentors. As a group, we need to figure out what types of mentorship programs and opportunities can work. If you have answers to these questions, please email them to [Torie.Fowler@usm.edu](mailto:Torie.Fowler@usm.edu). We look forward to hearing everyone's ideas!

## Midwinter Is Coming

Join MCS @ Midwinter Conference 2018



by **Xi Cui, Midwinter**  
**Chair and Kelly Kaufhold,**  
**Midwinter Associate Chair**

The University of Oklahoma will again

host the 2018 AEJMC Midwinter Conference in the beautiful Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication on Friday, March 2 and Saturday, March 3, 2018. It will be the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year for the Gaylord College at OU to host Midwinter Conference, so look for something special this year!

Midwinter Conference is a great opportunity for students and faculty to get initial feedback on their studies in an intimate, welcoming environment before the submission deadline for the Annual Conference. In 2017, despite a record number of Midwinter submissions, MCS had an acceptance rate of 54%. MCS, as usual, accounted for one-third of all papers presented at Midwinter Conference and hosted a record eight panels last year, including panels on journalism education, critical theory and culture, advertising, the 2016 campaign, agenda setting, the shifting boundaries of journalism, international differences in media, and meta-analysis as a research tool.

The deadline to submit to Midwinter Conference is noon on Friday, December 1. Submit your abstracts of 600 to 800 words, excluding author information



and references, to the [AEJMC Midwinter](#)

[Conference via the new content management system](#). You'll have to click the "Sign Up Here" link first, then select MCS as your division when you submit. If you have any questions, please email the MCS Midwinter Chair Xi Cui [cuix@cofc.edu](mailto:cuix@cofc.edu) or Midwinter Associate Chair [kellykaufhold@txstate.edu](mailto:kellykaufhold@txstate.edu). Authors will be notified of their submissions' status by mid-January.

Abstracts should give a clear sense of relevant literature, research objectives, methods employed, the stage of the research project and initial or expected findings and conclusions. Papers cannot be under review at other outlets (e.g., ICA). However, Midwinter Conference submissions, even accepted papers, are eligible to be resubmitted to the AEJMC Annual Conference April 1. The Division will also honor the top paper at Midwinter Conference and graduate students can apply for a \$500 travel award from MCS.

Panel proposals are also welcome. We always need Division members willing to serve as reviewers in December, and discussants and moderators in March. Please contact Xi Cui or Kelly Kaufhold if you are available and willing to help.





## Professional Freedom and Responsibility

by Dean Cummings, PF&R Chair

PF&R is a daunting acronym. At first sight, PF&R appears like a corporate logo or medical term. The letters may conceal the deeper meaning of the words they represent. Professional Freedom and Responsibility combine into a mission statement for all journalists. The hyper social media world magnifies the need for professionals who are appropriately trained and ethically grounded. Our Division believes journalistic freedom is essential and must be respected. The agents of the 4th Estate must be able to perform without restraints to maintain a vibrant democracy. Professional communicators welcome their responsibility to their community.

Practitioners in the field depend upon the collective encouragement, thoughtful examination and guidance of peers. Our Division provides a repository for those seeking knowledge and understanding of the roles and responsibilities of media professionals. MCS members use their research as a barometer of the media environment, and we serve professionals through engagement and training. Our goal is to prepare students for media careers with foundations in ethics, values and loyalties to professional freedom.

Many media corporations are heavily dependent on younger and less experienced employees. The workloads are increasing while

staffing remains the same or less. All of this leads to increased pressures, less guidance, and possibly more ethical dilemmas. Many students will land their first job and experience very little mentoring. It puts an enormous burden on instructors to provide their students with the mantras they will need to protect professional freedoms in the midst of daily deadlines and demands they will incur in the workplace. MCS provides a place for instructors to come together and

share techniques, knowledge, and experiences to build and maintain the ethical core of mass communication.

The power of mass communication comes with great responsibilities. It is essential that every member of Mass Communication and Society support the principles of professional freedom and responsibility. PF&R is a symbol of what we honor in our profession and what we expect to protect in the future.



## MCS Programming

by Jay Hmielowski, Vice Head

Mass Communication and Society had a successful set of panels this past Annual Conference. The panels focused on a wide variety of topics such as service learning experiences, the transition to full professor and becoming an administrator, teaching in disruptive media environments, improving the quality of publications in the field of mass communication, how to become a better journal reviewer and the future of computational journalism research. Many of these sessions were well attended by our members and others interested in the topics.

In terms of where things stand relative to next year's programming, I am happy to report that we have agreements with other divisions for all of our panels (excluding the

sessions for the paper competition). We will have another strong set of panels for AEJMC this year. For our research panels, one will provide an overview of agenda-setting research on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the seminal publication on this topic. In light of recent events tied to the NFL and President Trump, we will have a panel focused on the coverage of activism in sports. This year, our teaching panels will focus on teaching students to identify fake news along with a panel focused on the ins and outs of mentoring graduate students. Lastly, our Professional Freedom and Responsibility panels will focus on getting prepared for the academic job market along with a panel discussing the role of journalism in today's difficult political environment. We look forward to telling you more about these exciting panels in the coming months.

## Don't Miss The "Teachable Moments"



by **Chang Sup Park,**  
**Teaching Chair**  
and  
**Jack V. Karlis,**  
**Teaching Associate Chair**



As faculty, we meticulously plan our syllabi, lesson plans and tests or deadlines around the academic calendars of our institutions. What we don't plan for is a little thing called "life."

While we're preparing the next wave of mass communication professionals, we often forget to look at the history and the unique opportunities unfolding around us to infuse into our pedagogy.

The year 2017 has been nothing short of dynamic in terms of news value. For example, the recent tragedy of the Las Vegas mass shootings not only dominated the news cycle for days, but left both faculty and students searching for answers in an uncertain time. While it was an emotional gut punch to both faculty and students, it also provided some "teachable moments" for the classroom.

For example, those in strategic communication could look at the way law enforcement authorities handled the flow of information at a time when social media inundated our students with both misinformation and disinformation. A discussion of crisis communication would be opportune at this time. Those studying journalism could look at how the news cycle evolved from a late Sunday evening headline, "Mass Shooting at Las Vegas Concert" to the emergence of details about the shooter and his subsequent investigation days later. A discussion of solid reporting techniques could be examined in a time when everyone is rushing to be first.

For our Division, and our students, a very fluid conversation could emerge on the always "hot button" issue of gun control in the United States. A spontaneous class not listed on the syllabus could help explicate the amalgamation of media coverage, the Second Amendment, the NRA and mass shootings. An informed dialogue can emerge in our classrooms from tragedy in a time that may be unlike any other in mass communication history.

News never sleeps and neither should our flexibility to include current events in our pedagogy. Whether it's inflammatory tweets from celebrities or politicians, natural disasters, social justice movements, or whatever the world brings into our classrooms, we shouldn't pass up an opportunity to turn a tragedy into a "teachable moment."



## Membership Message

by **Nan Yu, Vice Head Elect/Membership Chair**

Mass Communication and Society is one of the largest and most active divisions of

AEJMC. Members of the Division are eligible for more teaching, research, graduate student, professional and service awards. In addition, MCS members receive a free subscription to *Mass Communication and Society Journal*, a Taylor & Francis publication with one of the highest impact factors in our field. We invite you to become a member of the MCS Division

and find out more about all the exciting things the Division has to offer. The easiest way to join the Division is by filling out AEJMC's official membership application. Be sure to indicate under the "AEJMC Divisions" that you wish to join MCS.

Faculty membership dues are currently \$24 while student membership dues are *free*, and the *Journal* is included with student memberships. For information on AEJMC membership benefits and to join, go to <http://www.aejmc.com/home/membership/>. Want more information before joining? Contact Nan Yu at [nan.yu@ucf.edu](mailto:nan.yu@ucf.edu).

## Theoretical Integration in Times of Change



by **Masahiro Yamamoto,**  
**Research Chair**

Since the beginning of the 2016 U.S. presidential election campaign, many interesting phenomena have occurred that catch our scholarly curiosity. Examples may include, but are not limited to, the tone of political discourse that seems to be more uncivil than ever before, constant attacks against the press from candidates, the rise of fake news on social media, the surge of alt-right voices not only on social media but also in mainstream discourse and Donald Trump's victory.

While these events, such as the fake news phenomenon, seem to be new in this past election, they may not be necessarily unique; rather, they may be the evolution of long-standing issues and concerns that mass communication scholars

have sought to explain. For example, after the election, observers speculated why polls underestimated levels of support for Trump. One speculation is the existence of shy Trump supporters who were afraid to say to pollsters that they voted for Trump because of the fear of potential disapproval (Mercer, Deane, & McGeeney, 2016) – the mechanism deeply rooted in the spiral of silence theory.

The current sociopolitical and information environments present opportunities to revisit existing theories of mass communication. We can test the theories to see how useful they are in explaining today's mass communication phenomena. An existing theory may not adequately explain what is happening today, and further scholarly work might be required within a concept or with an additional concept to enhance its applicability and explanatory power. This also may be an opportunity for theoretical integration to put forth a more unified account, or perhaps a new and innovative idea is waiting to be discovered.

*Mass Communication and Society Journal* is dedicated to addressing this important challenge. The *Journal* has published a number of essays and articles for theoretical advancement in times of change. The symposium, "Mass Communication Theories in a Time of Changing Technologies" edited by Dr. Leo Jeffres in 2015, is an example of such scholarly efforts. To continue this endeavor, the upcoming special issue, "Media Theory and the 2016 U.S. Election" edited by Dr. Michael Schmierbach, invites submissions of manuscripts designed to advance theories of mass communication with a special focus on the 2016 U.S. presidential election. We need to continue to theorize the role of mass communication in society and encourage our community to do the same.

Mercer, A., Deane, C., & McGeeney, K. (2016, November 9). Why 2016 election polls missed their mark. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/11/09/why-2016-election-polls-missed-their-mark/>



Melanie Sarge (center) presents Won-ki Moon (left) and Joon Kim (right) with the 1st Place Award in the Moller Student Competition.



## 2017 Mass Communication and Society Division Award Recipients

### Open Competition

- 1st Place Frank Waddell, University of Florida  
2nd Place Wan Chi Leung, University of Canterbury  
3rd Place John Brummette, Radford University  
Marcia DiStaso, University of Florida  
Michail Vafeiadis, Auburn University  
Marcus Messner, Virginia Commonwealth  
Terry Flynn, McMaster University

### Student Competition

- 1st Place Jiyoun Suk, University of Wisconsin-Madison  
2nd Place Yafei Zhang, University of Iowa  
Chuqing Dong, University of Minnesota

### Moller Student Competition

- 1st Place Won-ki Moon, University of South Carolina  
Joon Kim, University of South Carolina  
2nd Place Volha Kananovich, University of Iowa

### Service-Learning Award

Jensen Moore, University of Oklahoma

### MCS Dissertation Award

Rachel R. Mourão, Michigan State University

### Promising Professor Faculty Award Winners

- 1st Place Brett Sherrick, University of Alabama  
2nd Place Michael Devlin, Texas State University  
3rd Place Denise Hill, Elon University

### Promising Professor Student Award Winners

- 1st Place Minjie Li, Louisiana State University  
2nd Place Sean Leavey, Rutgers University  
3rd Place Myoung-Gi Chon, Louisiana State University

### Mass Communication and Society Division Reviewer of the Year

Chance York, Kent State University

### MCS Research Award Winners

Adam J. Sadler and Daniel Riffe,  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Brendan Watson, Michigan State University

### Student Research Award Winner

Jennifer Harker, UNC at Chapel Hill

### Graduate Travel Award

Jiyoung Lee, Syracuse University



**Left:** Jennifer Kowalewski (right) awards Rachel R. Mourão (left) the MCS Dissertation Award.

**Right:** Brian Bowe (right) presents Minjie Li (left) the First Place Student Promising Professor Award.



## 2017 MCS Division Business Meeting Minutes AEJMC Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, Aug. 10, 2017

Division Head Jennifer Kowalewski called the MCS Business Meeting of the 2017 Annual Conference to order at 6:47 p.m. Division Secretary Brendan Watson took the minutes. The Business Meeting started with reports from the various committee chairs.

### Division Head, Jennifer Kowalewski

- MCS is still number one division within AEJMC with 523 members as of last week. Jennifer noted that one reason the Division has grown is that graduate members no longer have to pay membership fees, which members voted to eliminate at the 2016 business meeting
- Jennifer also noted that there is still considerable room for growth of all divisions as 52% of people in AEJMC are not affiliated with any division or interest group. One goal of incoming AEJMC President Jennifer Greer is to find out why people aren't joining interest groups.
- Funds are up; the Division has \$25,519, an increase from \$21,323 in 2016; the journal has \$411,695 in funds, an increase of \$14,000 over the previous year.
- Demographics of our board are pretty evenly split of male/female, but board membership is primarily White and Asian. Jennifer noted that AEJMC is looking at increasing diversity of those involved in the association.
- Significant initiatives this year included MCS contributing to a grant for international study with the PR Division. The PR Division had only \$250 for a grant, which they increased this year to \$500; the MCS Division decided to help out PR with a matching grant of \$500 for a total of \$1,000. Members of the MCS Division can apply, and our members are on the committee to award the grant.
- MCS also created our first online newsletter with the summer 2017 newsletter, thanks to Newsletter Editor/Secretary Brendan Watson.

### Vice Head, Melanie Sarge

- This year the MCS Division programmed six panels at the Annual Conference:

#### PF&R

- Post-tenure Productivity and Becoming a Member of University Administration - Impacts for the Field
- Bad Science, Good Science: Improving Research in Our Field

#### Teaching

- Varieties of Growth Pedagogy: Teaching Media in Disruptive Environments
- Doing Good Work for the Greater Good: Creating Mutually Beneficial Service Learning Experiences

#### Research

- Academic Myths, Demystified: The Hero's Journey to Becoming a Good Reviewer for Journals and Conferences
- Digital Data, Computation, and Research in Journalism/Mass Communication Linking Methodological Innovations to Theory-Building
- MCS also sponsored a pre-conference with the Public Relations Division
- There has been pressure from AEJMC to co-sponsor with smaller interest groups; this year we co-sponsored with the Graduate Student Interest Group along with the Media Ethics Division, Communication Theory and Methodology Division, Cultural and Critical Studies Division, Internships and Careers Interest Group, and the Communication Technology Division.
- Melanie also reported on the diversity of panelists and moderators; panelists were evenly split between males and females; the majority of panelists were White, but three were international scholars; six were Asian; three were Black, and one was Hispanic.



## 2017 MCS Division Business Meeting Minutes AEJMC Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, Aug. 10, 2017

### Vice Head-Elect, Jay Hmielowski

- Jay reviewed the Division mentorship program between faculty and graduate students, which started in 2016.
- 18 people signed up: 9 faculty and 9 graduate students.
- Jay sent a survey to participants, but only 9 sent out survey; only 2 mentees filled out survey and only 1 filled it out all of the way; 5 mentors filled out the survey.
- Faculty expressed that the program was not well focused and wasn't a good use of time; biggest issue that faculty mentioned in open-ended response was that after initial conversation mentors did not further contact/discussions with mentees.
- Jay also mentioned that in his personal experience many questions he got from his mentee are questions that should in theory be better answered by mentors at the students' universities
- Member Robert McKeever mentioned that he had a more positive experience with his graduate student mentee.
- Kevin Williams suggested spending some of the funds to entice activities between mentors and mentees, such as possibly planning a couple of retreat weekends with mentors/mentees during the academic year.
- Melanie Sarge mentioned that a lot of graduate students go to Midwinter Conference and that could be a good opportunity for mentoring

### MCS Journal, Fuyuan Shen

- Fuyuan mentioned that the *Journal* is doing very well and thanked members for their contribution to making the journal a success.
- One of Shen's goals was to restructure the board and look at the review record over the past several years to make sure board members are active reviewers and that associate editors are active scholars.
- Shen introduced two new associated editors for 2018: Patrick Meirick from the University of

Oklahoma and James Ivory from Virginia Tech University.

- The Associate editors also nominated new board members: Michael Delli Carpini, University of Pennsylvania; Jorg Matthes, University of Vienna; Erin Whiteside, University of Tennessee-Knoxville; Gi Woong Yun, University of Nevada-Reno; Leticia Bode, Georgetown University; and Renita Coleman, University of Texas-Austin.
- In the past 12 months, the journal received 410 submissions, and the acceptance rate was 8.5%, down from 9.1% last year.
- The *Journal* ranking increased and its impact factor (1.308; five-year impact factor=1.543) also increased significantly. The *Journal's* Scimago Journal Ranking in communication (#35, up from #36) is now higher than *JMCQ*.
- The *Journal* account balance is strong.
- Upcoming special issues are on "Media, War, and Terrorism," and "Media Theory and the U.S. Election" with a Nov. 1, 2017 deadline.

### Midwinter Committee, Kelly Kaufhold

- MCS again set a record-setting participation; for the first time Midwinter had simultaneous panels; MCS sponsored eight panels.
- There were 57 submissions, 31 of which were accepted for a 54% acceptance rate.
- Had first panel on research method on meta-analysis on communication research.
- Participants came from all over the country and all over the world.
- Kelly also reported on the demographics of paper judges, panelists, moderators, and discussants, noting a need to expand participation among non-white, non-male reviewers.
- Next year Oklahoma will celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary hosting Midwinter Conference.
- Kelly thanked MCS for participating as reviewers and reminded members that final-year graduate students can also participate as reviewers.

## 2017 MCS Division Business Meeting Minutes AEJMC Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, Aug. 10, 2017

### Research Committee, Nan Yu

- Nan reported that MCS had 105 submissions; three were disqualified. The number of submissions is down slightly from last year. Nan noted that it is not unusual to have some variability of submissions based on location of conference and when non-U.S. location of ICA is upcoming. Acceptance rate was 48.5%, which is consistent with acceptance rates of previous years.
- There were three award-winning faculty papers, two student paper winners and two winners of the Moller Student Competition for papers that were part of a class project.
- MCS had 89 reviewers for the Division, each of whom reviewed between two and five papers; Nan thanked members for reviewing.
- Nan Yu presented demographics of paper reviewers and authors.
- Nan also noted that MCS gets some international submissions, which is unique for AEJMC divisions.

### Teaching Committee, Brian Bowe

- Brian highlighted some of the programs that the Teaching Committee of MCS conducts. The Teaching Committee maintains a syllabi exchange, but there are only 4 syllabi. Brian suggested that perhaps the syllabi exchange could be expanded to share discreet course assignments/projects.
- The Teaching Committee also awards various awards:
- The Promising Professor and Distinguished Educator awards remain active.
- MCS hasn't received many submissions for other, new awards, such as the teaching ideas competition, the adjunct/instructor award, and the service-learning award.
- Brian suggested that we need to work to increase awareness of other awards as a significant goal of the Teaching Committee for the upcoming year.

- Brian said that the Teaching Committee wants to increase participation in the syllabi exchange and perhaps add an assignment exchange for ideas on individual student projects.

### PF&R Committee, Jennifer Kowalewski in place of Chair Scott Parrott

- PF&R sponsored the panel "Bad science, good science: Improving research in our field," which was co-sponsored with CT&M. The panel brought together editors from some of the top journals to discuss how to improve the quality of published research.
- PF&R also sponsored two off-site tours at Chicago Tribune and Chicago Public Media. Jennifer noted that there were approximately 12 slots still available for the Chicago Public Media tour.

### Awards Committee, Jennifer Kowalewski presented awards in place of Chair Ben LaPoe

- Jennifer noted that the Division used to do awards at the business meeting, but now it presents awards at the Friday awards luncheon, which was continued from 2016 based on positive feedback.

### Communications Committee, Jack Karlis

- Jack reported on social media growth; the Division's following has increased 13% on Facebook; 20% on Twitter; and 51% on LinkedIn; as of July 2017, the Division had 26 followers on its recently-launched Instagram page.

## New Business

### Assessment Overview, Jennifer Kowalewski

- MCS Division underwent 5-year assessment and passed with flying colors.
- There were a couple of ideas that the assessment committee mentioned:

## 2017 MCS Division Business Meeting Minutes AEJMC Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, Aug. 10, 2017

### Leadership

- One idea is to expand the slate beyond just the Head's input to include Vice Head and Vice Head-Elect.
- Another issue is how to get people to move through leadership positions in the Division; one idea is to clear some of the path.
- First proposed change to the bylaws is to make it so that the Head, Vice Head, and Vice Head-Elect put forth the slate of officers at the annual MCS Business Meeting and that nominations could be made from the floor during the MCS Business Meeting at which the election is held.
- Brendan Watson mentioned it is a good idea to leave positions for which there is no interest from existing board open until the Business Meeting to get new members interested.
- Kevin Williams suggested we need a process for people to openly run for office.
- Kevin Williams made a friendly amendment to change language to "before or during" the convention; revision with amendment passed unanimously.
- The second proposed change to the bylaws, that the Head, Vice Head, and Vice Head-Elect will appoint committee members was also unanimously approved.
- The third proposed change to the bylaws concerned movement into leadership; the proposed language read: "Before an MCS Officer can become Vice Head-Elect of the MCS Division he/she should be a successful Division Officer in multiple positions. The person appointed also must have served as either Research Chair or Midwinter Chair. If no suitable candidate is available, the Head, Vice Head, and Vice Head Elect may appoint someone."
- Brian Bowe moved to offer a friendly amendment to change language to add "committee"
- Brian also asked if we'd "accept credit" from other divisions; Jennifer K. said that we probably would not.
- Revision to bylaws with revision passed unanimously; the approved language read: "Before an MCS Officer can become Vice Head-Elect

of the MCS Division he/she should be a successful Division Officer in multiple positions on different committees. The person appointed also must have served as either Research Chair or Midwinter Chair. If no suitable candidate is available, the Head, Vice Head, and Vice Head-Elect may appoint someone."

### Goals for Division, Melanie Sarge

- Melanie noted that several years ago the Division had created a committee to decide what to do with its money; one suggestion was to create \$100,000 endowment fund; it was voted on (and approved) at the 2016 business meeting, but had not been done. Jennifer and Melanie Sarge were going to make sure that the endowment fund is established as soon as possible.
- MCS is also renegotiating its contract with Taylor and Francis to publish the *Mass Communication and Society Journal*. The contract was last negotiated seven years ago.
- Members voted unanimously to allow Division Head, Vice-Head, and Journal Editor to negotiate the contract with Taylor and Francis.
- Kevin Williams suggested that we perhaps hire Stephen Perry as a consultant. Jennifer noted that Perry has been doing that courtesy for free.
- AEJMC wants us to do more with our journal funds; a sub-committee is going to be led by Melanie Sarge to generate ideas.
- Melanie also noted that the Division needs to improve communication. Melanie is going to look into using AEJMC's email marketing program to improve email/communication.
- Melanie said she also wants to make sure officers are aware of their position responsibilities.
- She also wants to increase panel suggestions and increase application for awards and paper submissions. Melanie noted again that overall the Division needs to do a much better job of promotion and communication.
- The final goal is to look to further improving the mentoring program.



## Call for Special Issue of *Mass Communication and Society* Journal: Media Theory and the 2016 U.S. Election

*Mass Communication and Society Journal* is seeking submissions for a special issue related to the 2016 election, and the deadline is growing close. Anyone with a potentially relevant manuscript should consider submitting. The last time the *Journal* had a special issue related to the election it generated some of the most-cited articles in the history of the *Journal*.

Publishing in a special issue like this is likely to increase the visibility of research because related searches will lead people to your work. Because this is a large topic that directly relates to the core mission of the *Journal*, we have some flexibility on the number of papers that will be published, and we will find a space for all articles that meet normal reviewing standards.

Manuscripts are to be submitted following the standard journal submission procedures by November 1, 2017, via the Mass Communication and Society online system at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/mcas>. Authors should note in their cover letters that the submission is for the special issue devoted to "Media Theory and the 2016 U.S. Election." Final publication will be in Volume 21 (2018).

Any questions concerning this call for papers may be directed to Professor Mike Schmierbach at [mgs15@psu.edu](mailto:mgs15@psu.edu).

## 2017 MCS Division Business Meeting Minutes AEJMC Annual Conference Chicago, IL, Aug. 10, 2017

- Kevin Williams suggested again that we have the money and that we need to spend it; Williams suggested again perhaps having a retreat for the Executive Committee to brainstorm yearly goals.
- Melanie Sarge presented the slate of 2017-2018 MCS Officers:
- Graduate Student Liaison Chair position is open; Torie Fowler, Ph.D. student at the University of Southern Mississippi volunteered to serve.
- Slate with Graduate Student Liaison Chair was unanimously approved.
- Lastly, the membership voted on the location of the 2021 AEJMC Annual Conference. The tally was: Austin, Texas (11); New Orleans, LA (9); St. Louis, MO (0) and Kansas City, MO (0).
- The meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m. for members to attend MCS Division social at Pinstripes.

### *Head ...Continued from Page 1*

contract with Taylor and Francis. Dr. Shen will continue to manage this process and keep us updated on the *Journal's* continued success.

Lastly, I urge all readers to check out the information in this newsletter about the upcoming Midwinter Conference. Midwinter provides a relaxed setting for presentations and extended discussions that is ideal for graduate students. Submissions are abstract only, and we will be looking for members to serve as abstract reviewers in December.

I think that is everything I had to tell you for now, but please be sure you are following MCS Social Media (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn) for the latest updates and conversations. Thanks for being a member of MCS, and I look forward to talking with you again!

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