



Newsletter

Vol. 51, Issue 2
Spring 2018

Mass Communication and Society Goes to Washington



by **Melanie Sarge, MCS Division Head**

The spring issue of our newsletter is by far the most helpful from year to year. This issue is packed with information regarding the Annual Conference in August. It hints at what panels and tours MCS will offer, provides instructions and opportunities relative to manuscript submissions and award applications, and gives tips to our graduate student members on how best to navigate the Annual Conference.

Additionally, this issue showcases updates from our *MCS Journal* Editor, Dr. Fuyuan Shen, and the success of our Division's Midwinter Conference involvement that occurred in the beginning of March at the University of Oklahoma.

I would also like to take a moment to thank those of you who have already agreed to review for our Division and/or participate

in one of our Division's panels. If you haven't already received an email from me, I'll be sending out one final request for reviewers before the paper submission deadline on April 1st (<http://aejmc.org/events/dc18/papercall/>). On a related note, I do apologize for the heavier email communication you receive from MCS during the spring, but we just don't want you to miss out on any of the exciting opportunities you are eligible for as a member!

Remember, MCS exists to benefit its members, so renew your membership and visit our website (<http://aejmc.us/mcs/>) to learn more about what we offer. For instance, the website provides specific instructions on how to apply for awards up to \$10,000 designed to thank you for your research, teaching and service efforts! Further, we want to continue improving MCS, so I ask that members forward me, Melanie Sarge (m.sarge@ttu.edu), any suggestions you have aimed at improving the Division and the careers of the members within the Division.

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Annual Conference Panels and Programs

by Jay Hmielowski, Vice Head

This year's research, teaching, and PF&R sessions will be of great interest to our members. We believe the topics will provide valuable information for practitioners, graduate students, professors, and members of other divisions. To begin with, we have two great research panels scheduled for this year's Annual Conference. The first panel provides an overview of agenda-setting theory. This year marks the 50th anniversary of agenda-setting being formally proposed. In this session, Max McCombs, Donald Shaw, and David Weaver will provide a historical overview of agenda-setting theory and research (Scheduled for Wednesday, Aug. 8th at 5:15pm). Our second research panel, Did She Really Say That?: How Sports Media Present and Represent Political, Social, and Cultural issues, will tackle the issue of politics and sports. This past year has highlighted the importance and ensuing controversies related to athletes' political activism. Indeed, the NFL became the center of attention with players kneeling during the National Anthem. In addition, in an unusual move, the Golden State Warriors refused to visit the White House after winning the NBA championship last year. This panel will include leading sports communication scholars who will discuss important ongoing research associated with this topic of political activism in sports (Scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 7th at 10:00am).

We also have two great teaching panels scheduled for the upcoming conference. The first panel focuses on mentoring graduate students. Training graduate students is important for the health of the field of communication and can be beneficial to the professors training the students. However, this process can also take a great deal of time and effort. This panel will provide perspectives from a number of scholars regarding their approach to training graduate students (Scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 7th at 11:45am). Our second teaching panel, 10 Cool Ideas You Can Use Right Now to Teach Ethics, Fake News (and maybe even organize your life), hits on a timely issue: fake news. This panel will discuss a variety of instructional methods that are designed to help undergraduates identify and understand the difference between good news and fake news content (Scheduled for Thursday, Aug. 9th at 11:00am).

Lastly, we have a wide range of PF&R sessions planned this year. First, we will be sponsoring two tours. The first will be a tour of the Newseum. This tour will highlight issues such as the first amendment and free press in the U.S. (Scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 7th at 1:30pm). The second tour will be of the Library of Congress. This tour will center on the Thomas Jefferson Building and the history of the Library (Scheduled for Wednesday,

Aug. 8th at 10:00am). We also have two PF&R sessions planned for the upcoming conference. Our first panel, Demystifying the Academic Job Market, will be of particular interest to our student members who are getting ready for the job market. This session will provide perspectives of individuals at a range of universities (e.g., research 1 institute, liberal arts college, religious institute, etc.) regarding what they look for in their job applicants. This should be an enlightening session for those thinking about or getting ready for the job market (Scheduled for Monday, Aug. 6th at 11:45am). Our last session, The Reciprocal Relationship between Journalists and Academics, will focus on the perspectives of journalists and academics and their ideas concerning a free press and research in today's hostile political environment. With politicians identifying various media outlets as enemies, it is important for journalists and academics to understand the disconnect and symbiotic relationship among contemporary news media and academic research (Scheduled for Monday, Aug. 6th at 3:15pm). In the end, these sessions cover a range of historically important and current event topics.

We hope you take time to learn more about these sessions and tours as the conference approaches.



Submit Nominations Now for MCS Awards

by Robert McKeever, Awards Chair

Greetings from the MCS Awards Committee! We hope your spring semester is going well. We also want to remind you of the many awards MCS has to offer and encourage you to take advantage of these unique opportunities to be rewarded for your hard work. All submissions will be forwarded to the appropriate review committees, and each eligible submission will then be blind reviewed and a decision on the winning submissions will be made. As always, we strongly encourage our Division members to apply for these awards to recognize your outstanding contributions to our field. We look forward to receiving your submissions soon!

Please see brief summaries of the awards below, with detailed information available on the website (<http://aejmc.us/mcs/awards/>) on how to apply:

Research Award

MCS Research Awards fund outstanding research proposals focused on some aspect of mass communication research. Recipients are given \$10,000 to complete the proposed research project. \$5,000 will be presented to the recipient(s) at this year's Annual Conference award ceremony. The remaining \$5,000 will be given after the authors submit their paper to our Division journal.

Dissertation Award

The MCS Dissertation Award is given to reward excellence in graduate research. Award winners are given a cash prize of \$3,000 and an opportunity to publish in the Division's journal.

Promising Professor Award

The MCS Promising Professor Awards honor new faculty and graduate students who demonstrate excellence and innovation in teaching.

Distinguished Educator Award

The MCS Distinguished Educator Award is given each year to a member of MCS who has made a significant contribution to mass communication pedagogy.

Adjunct/Instructor Award

MCS Adjunct/Instructor Awards are granted each year in recognition of the outstanding contributions of adjuncts and instructors in advancing teaching excellence in the field of mass communication.

Teaching Ideas Competition

The MCS Teaching Ideas Competition recognizes innovation and excellence in teaching in the field of mass communication.

Service-Learning Award

The MCS Service-Learning Awards assist faculty by providing a \$500 stipend to use in their service-learning courses.

Professional Freedom and Responsibility Award

The MCS PF&R Awards recognize excellence in research, teaching or service related to the five PF&R principles identified by AEJMC.

Professional Award

The MCS Professional Awards seek to recognize professionals for upholding the values of professional freedom and responsibility, diversity and public service.

Trayes Service Award

The Trayes Service Award honors exemplary service to the MCS Division.

All awards have an April 30, 2018 deadline.

**Email Robert McKeever
(robert.mckeever@sc.edu)
or
Fan Yang
(fyang@albany.edu)
if you have any questions.**



PF&R Committee Sponsors Tours to Newseum and Library of Congress

by Dean Cummings, PF&R Chair

Two great tours will be available at the AEJMC Annual Conference. The Professional Freedom and Responsibility Committee will be sponsoring a tour to the Newseum and the Library of Congress. The Newseum is a “must-see” destination when you are in Washington, D.C. We will have a guided tour of the exhibits, and during the conference, “Pictures of the Year: 75 Years of the World’s Best Photography” will be on display. The display will feature award-winning images from the archives of Pictures of the Year International. The

pictures were selected from 40,000 photos that trace the evolution of photojournalism from World War II to today. It will be a fantastic experience for all journalists. We hope you can come along.

We will also be heading to the Library of Congress for a private tour. This tour will give you a chance to see and learn about the symbolic art and architecture of the building and explore the collections available for public viewing. We will learn more about Thomas Jefferson and the history behind

the Library of Congress. The tour should give you an overview of all rare holdings, and if you want to stick around afterward, reading rooms are available to find articles and books. The reading rooms contain law books, newspapers, rare books, and motion pictures archives. This library is a researcher’s dream.

PF&R hopes to give you an opportunity to tour two of the best museums for journalists and researchers in Washington, D.C. Please join us.

NEWSEUM

Photo Credit: Maria Bryk/Newseum



The Paper Submission Deadline Is Almost Here

by Masahiro Yamamoto, Research Chair

As the paper submission deadline for the 2018 AEJMC Annual Conference is approaching (11:59 pm, CDT on Sunday, 4/1), we would like to call your attention to the three research-related awards MCS provides to acknowledge excellence in research: the Dissertation Award, Research Award, and Top Paper Award.

Dissertation and Research Awards: MCS offers these awards to encourage innovative projects that advance mass communication research. The Dissertation Award provides a cash prize of \$3,000 and an opportunity to publish in our Division journal *Mass Communication and Society*. The MCS Research Award provides the total monetary award up to \$10,000 to two faculty-led research projects and \$5,000 to one graduate student-led research project.

“This research award allowed us to conduct much higher quality research than we could have otherwise. We were able to afford a panel sample of nationally representative survey respondents for our study of agenda-setting in the 2016 election, as well as pay to have a

large amount of news stories and visuals coded from a wide variety of media,” said Professor Renita Coleman at the University of Texas at Austin. She and Professor Denis Wu at Boston University were winners of the 2015-16 Research Award.

“This research award allowed us to conduct much higher quality research than we could have otherwise.”

**-Professor Renita Coleman,
University of Texas at Austin**

The deadline for both awards is 11:59 pm (EST) on April 30, 2018. Visit the Dissertation Award and Research Award pages for more details.

Top Paper Award: To acknowledge excellence in research, MCS provides cash awards and waives one AEJMC Annual Conference registration fee for the top three winners in each of the three annual

conference paper competition categories: (1) Open Competition, (2) Student Competition, or (3) Moller Student Paper Competition.

Papers must follow the paper submission guidelines outlined in the AEJMC Uniform Paper Call and additional MCS Division’s guidelines to receive full consideration. In particular, make sure that author-identifying information does NOT appear anywhere in your papers. Papers with author-identifying information will be automatically disqualified without review. Also, you can appear as author or co-author on a maximum of 2 papers to the MCS competition. Papers must not be under consideration elsewhere for presentation or publication.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact MCS Research Chair: Masahiro Yamamoto (myamamoto2@albany.edu), Associate Chair: Azmat Rasul (arasul@fsu.edu), Committee Member: Kalyani Chadha (kchadha@umd.edu), or Committee Member: Brendan Watson (brwatson@msu.edu).

We look forward to receiving your submissions and seeing you in Washington, D.C. in August!



Mass Communication and Society Journal Update

by Fuyuan Shen, *MCS Journal* Editor

Each year, *Mass Communication and Society Journal* publishes a special issue on an important and timely topic in our discipline. Our special issues have been well-received in recent years. They have allowed us to raise awareness of emerging and new research topics, and to attract new authors and readers. Special issue papers can also generate significant research impact.

Our 2017 special issue on *Media, Terrorism and Society* was edited by Shahira Fahmy, University of Arizona. At the end of this year, we plan to publish our 2018 special issue on *Media Theory and the 2016 U.S. Election*. Michael Schmierbach, Pennsylvania State University, is the editor of this latest special issue.

We typically select scholars with relevant expertise in a subject area to serve as guest editors for our special issues. Members of our editorial board, the associate editors and the editor are involved in the nomination and selection of special issue topics.

We have recently selected two new topics for our next special issues, to be published in 2019 and 2020 respectively. The 2019 issue

will focus on the role of mass and social media during the worldwide “refugee crisis.” It invites theoretical and empirical contributions on the depiction of the refugee crisis in the media and its effects on public opinion, political radicalization, and social coherence. The issue will be edited by Hajo Boomgaarden, Sophie Lecheler, and Jörg Matthes, University of Vienna.

The 2020 issue will focus on fake news and news perceptions. The goal is to invite scholars to submit papers that build upon traditional approaches for understanding mass media’s role in defining and amplifying news and perceptions of it. Donnalyn Pompper, University of Oregon, and Lindsay Hoffman, University of Delaware, will serve as co-editors.

We are now in the process of putting together the paper calls for these two special issues. Please check the *Journal’s* website (<https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/hmcs20/current>) in a few weeks for additional details. If you have any papers or have done studies in these relevant areas, please share your research with us and submit your papers to our special issues.



Graduate Student Conference Advice

by Julia DeCook,
Graduate Student Committee

Conferences are an ideal time to connect with other scholars, to start building a wider network of fellow graduate students and future collaborators, and to make good impressions on future employers/colleagues. Here are some tips to not just survive the conference, but to thrive:

1. Have an elevator pitch ready and rehearsed. You will most likely be introducing yourself to a lot of new people, and having something quick, pithy, and ready to go will help with this process.
2. Attend the business meetings of the divisions you are most interested in (like, for instance, MCS). “But how do I know what division I’m interested in?” you may ask. Aside from reading the description of the divisions, it helps to identify which divisions have scholars you admire presenting in them.
3. On the note of attending the business meeting, if you are a graduate student, volunteer to be the graduate student liaison for that division. This is a great way to begin networking closely with the heads of these divisions and to start building your own name recognition.

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Graduate Student Conference Advice

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4. Attend the informal mixers that divisions hold for a lower-stakes networking opportunity – you will see these advertised on social media, on the official schedule, and through word of mouth. These are often the best places to connect with people that you may share research interests with in a more purposeful way and in a more relaxed setting.

5. Alcohol can be a great way to lower your anxiety level (it’s called “liquid courage” for a reason), but it can also be your downfall if you rely too much on it. Basically, do not drink too much.

6. When you connect with new people, do not talk about yourself too much. Have a conversation. Do not talk at them. If you meet a senior scholar you admire, it can be easy to become overwhelmed. This guide on how to talk to famous professors is extremely helpful: <https://www.chronicle.com/article/How-to-Talk-to-Famous/240518>

Other tips that I have found helpful are: Wear comfortable shoes. Do not carry a heavy bag. And finally, have fun!



Midwinter Conference Celebrates 10th Anniversary: MCS Sets Records

by Xi Cui, Midwinter Chair

On Friday, March 2 and Saturday, March 3, the University of Oklahoma hosted the AE-JMC Midwinter Conference for the 10th consecutive year at the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication. MCS set multiple records again with 63 submissions, 33 abstracts accepted (52% acceptance rate, in line with previous years) and 11 panels. In the end, 30 studies were presented spread across both days of the conference. MCS Midwinter Conference panels showcased work from 49 authors, including two dozen graduate students. Presenters hailed from Oklahoma, Texas, Virginia, Illinois, Kansas, California, Indiana, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Florida. Topics included two panels on health communication, media and partisan politics, political participation, agenda setting, media personalization, journalistic ethics, branding and public relations, race and media, media history, meta-analyses and critical/cultural discourse.

As usual, MCS had the largest representation of any division at Midwinter Conference, with the most accepted abstracts of any division – 33 out of 99 total presentations.

Elanie Steyn, journalism sequence head at the University of Oklahoma and organizer of the Midwinter Conference, honored

a handful of regular attendees, including MCS Midwinter Co-Chair Dr. Kelly Kaufhold who has attended seven of OU’s ten Midwinter conferences. Congratulations, also, to Hark Shin Kim, John Velez and Erik Bucy, from Texas Tech University, for authoring the top abstract in the MCS Division at Midwinter Conference this year. MCS is also the only division which offers competitive travel awards to attend Midwinter Conference. Aaron Atkins of Ohio University and Hark Shin Kim from Texas Tech each received up to \$500 from the Division to help defray costs to attend Midwinter Conference.

Remember, Midwinter Conference is unique among conferences – authors can present their work there, get expert scholarly feedback in March, and still submit to the Annual Conference on April 1! And submitting to Midwinter Conference is easy. Watch for notices on MCS social media and in the listserv during the fall with details and a link; then submit your 600 to 800-word abstract via the Microsoft CMT Research database in early December. You’ll learn your status in mid-January and final papers are due in February, a couple of weeks before the Midwinter Conference, which is also an excellent, welcoming venue for graduate students and first-time presenters.

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