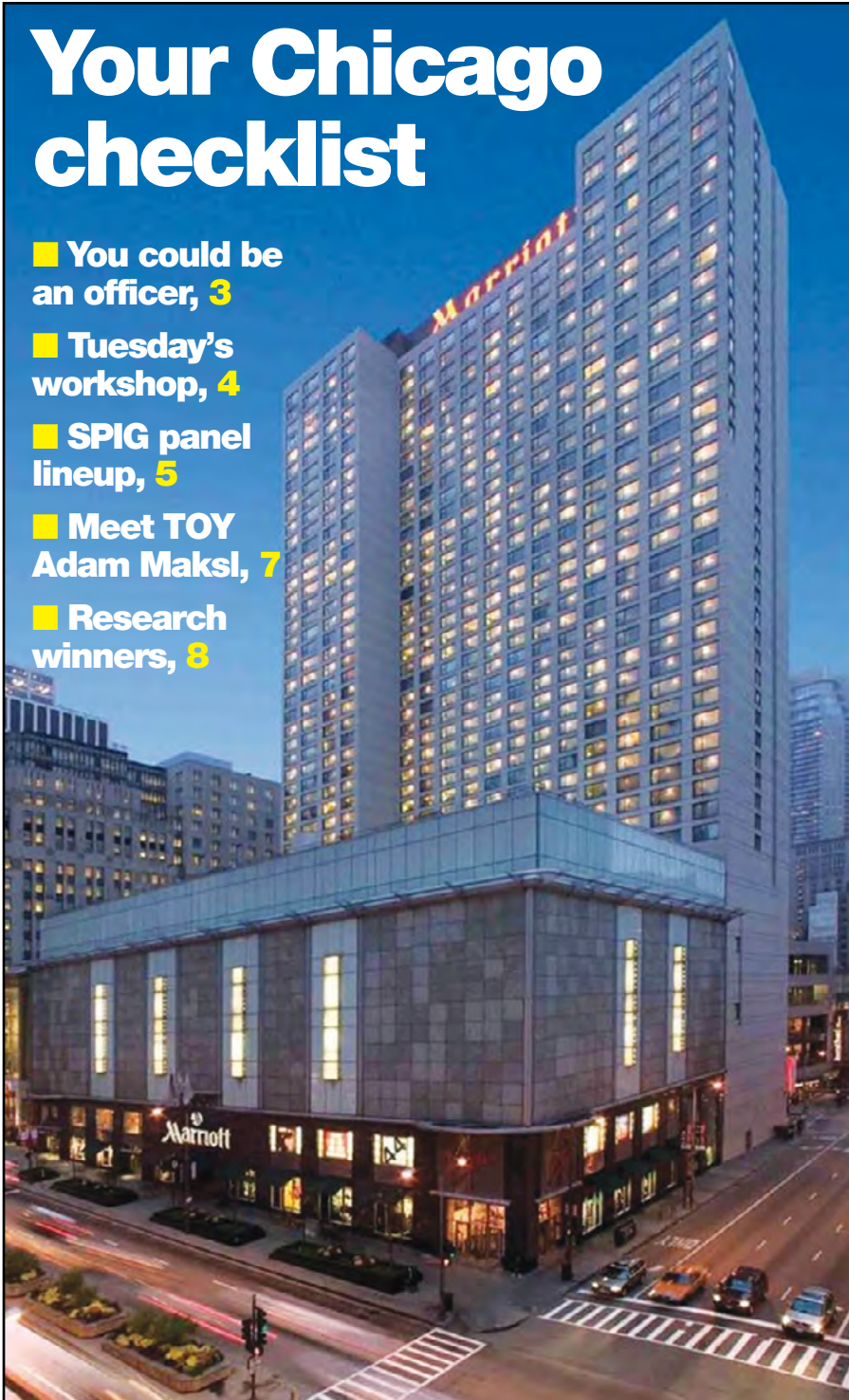


spig news

Summer 2017: *The official newsletter of the AEJMC Small Programs Interest Group*

Your Chicago checklist

- You could be an officer, **3**
- Tuesday's workshop, **4**
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Doug Mendenhall

head notes

Our interests are anything but 'small'

SPIG vibrates on a lot of different wavelengths

Our name can be a little limiting: "Small Programs Interest Group." Sounds puny or undersized – a group to be passed over, right?

Well, we may be small, but we're a lot of other things, too.

In fact, one of the things I appreciate about SPIG is that the interests of its members spread into every other division and interest group of the expansive AEJMC realm.

The wonderful, helpful AEJMC office doesn't keep tabs on what additional memberships we cultivate, so I used the SPIG listserv to find out. Here are some of your answers:

Doug Cumming (Washington and Lee) is incoming head of the History Division (congrats),

See **MEMBERS** on page 2

head notes

Members have broad interests

Continued from page 1

but calls SPIG “a community for practical issues unique to teaching journalism or mass communication within a sometimes-uncomprehending university setting.”

Jack Zibluk (Tennessee-Chattanooga), our incoming journal editor, has tried the rest but keeps coming home to SPIG. “It’s really the only division or group where we seem to face the same issues as I do: balancing teaching, research and professional practice. SPIG members retain ties to the professional community more than other groups,” he says. “We are more diverse in our backgrounds and also in our race and gender backgrounds. We have a good contingent of faith-based schools who may be subrepresented or underrepresented elsewhere. We have no silos in SPIG. We are broadcasters and print people, PR and advertising people. We are real.”

Carrie Buchanan (John Carroll), co-editor of the *SPIG News*, belongs to Newspaper and Online, Law and Policy, and ComsHER. She just joined Community News, too. And sometimes she joins other divisions depending on her current research and courses.

Lisa Weidman (Linfield) feeds her research and teaching interests with memberships in Advertising, Magazine Media, Public Relations, Mass Comm. & Society, Internships & Careers, and Sports Communication.

Dave Madsen (Morningside) is of course a member of Electronic News Division after a 30-year career in television, but he’s active in SPIG, too.

John McClelland (Roosevelt, retired) keeps up his memberships

in Visual Communication and News as well as SPIG. “Over the years,” he says, “I’ve had more interaction with SPIG than with all others combined.”

Michael Longinow (Biola) had to trim his many memberships for budget reasons (most of us have been there), but he kept SPIG and Religion and Media – for which he’s previously served as head. “I’m a member of that because of the alignment that group has with the mission of our program and my own research interests,” he says.

Kay Colley (Texas Wesleyan) is one of those department heads who maintains several memberships to keep on top of happenings in the bigger groups. However, she likes the attitude and practicality of SPIG. “I mostly focus on how to put theory into practice. I find that SPIG members are the ones who generally do that,” she says. “Plus, I can always rely on civil discourse on the listserv and people who will offer me a helping hand, or just a willing ear.”



Photo courtesy Lisa Weidman

SPIG member Lisa Weidman is involved in at least six other AEJMC groups, but still found time to visit the Oregon Coast.

Katherine Orloff (Hood) is part of one of those all-SPIG departments, but she also follows her personal interests to Entertainment Studies and the History Division.

John Jenks (Dominican) has research interests in Cold War propaganda and media structures, so he is also a member of History and International.

Rosemarie Alexander (Alaska-Southeast) also belongs to Mass Comm. and Society. However, she says, “Since finding SPIG, I can see that this is the division that will help me the most in my job.”

Kim Fox (The American University in Cairo) is pretty new to SPIG and already active in the Commission on the Status of Women and the Electronic News Division. Her comment about SPIG is what we hope to hear from every new member: “I like the vibe,” she says.

Glad to have you, Kim, and thanks for contributing to our vibe.

new leadership

SPIG will need new officers to hit the ground after Chicago

It’s time for musical chairs in the SPIG executive. Doug Mendenhall is finishing his year as president, and Vice Head Sonya DiPalma will be moving up to the presidency at our August meeting Friday night at the AEJMC conference. Second Vice Head Carrie Sipes will move up to first vice head and Secretary Cindy Simoneau will be finishing her term. Many thanks to all of you for the work you have done and will be doing to make the Small Programs Interest Group a wonderful organization.

These changes leave two openings on the SPIG executive: a new second vice head (willing to move up in years to come) and a secretary are needed. If you are interested in either role, please contact DiPalma before the conference at sdipalma@unca.edu.

We also expect some turnover in other positions, which are listed below and on the website [here](#). Please let DiPalma know if you wish either to step down or step up for one of these positions.

One other position that will be



DiPalma

changing is Newsletter Co-editor. Carrie Buchanan will be stepping down due to other commitments, but Doug Mendenhall is willing to stay on as co-editor doing the layout

and design, if someone else steps up to do the copyediting role. Feel free to email Buchanan for more information about what’s expected at cbuchanan@jcu.edu.

current spig officers

Head: Doug Mendenhall, Abilene Christian University, doug.mendenhall@acu.edu

First Vice Head: Sonya DiPalma, University of North Carolina-Ashville, sdipalma@unca.edu

Second Vice Head: Carrie Sipes, Shippensburg University, casipes@ship.edu

Immediate Past Head: Pam Parry, Southeast Missouri State University, pparry@semo.edu

Secretary: Cindy Simoneau, Southern Connecticut State University, simoneauc1@southernct.edu

Research Committee Co-Chairs: Jackie Incollingo, Rider University, jincollingo@rider.edu; Dave Madsen, Morningside College, madsen@morningside.edu

Teaching Committee/Teacher of the Year Competition Co-Chairs: Elizabeth Atwood, Hood College, atwood@hood.edu; Cindy Simo-

neau, Southern Connecticut State University, simoneauc1@southernct.edu

PF&R Committee Co-Chairs: Michael A. Longinow, Biola University, michael.longinow@biola.edu; Katherine Orloff, Hood College, orloff@hood.edu

Newsletter Co-Editors: Carrie Buchanan, John Carroll University, c.m.buchanan@mac.com [Editorial Content]; Doug Mendenhall, Abilene Christian University, dm-l08a@acu.edu [Design and Layout]

Commission on Status of Women: Sandra Combs, Arkansas State, scombs@astate.edu

Webmaster: Mitzi Lewis, Midwestern State University, mitzi.lewis@mwsu.edu

Listserv: Brian Steffen, Simpson College, brian.steffen@simpson.edu

Membership Co-Chairs: Michael Ray Smith, Palm Beach Atlantic University, michael.smith2@pba.edu; Darren Sweeney, Central Connecticut State University, sweeneyda@ccsu.edu

Social Media Co-Chairs: Jodie Gil, Southern Connecticut State University, gilj4@southernct.edu; Christopher Birks, Benedictine University, cbirks@ben.edu

GIFT Liaisons: Kay Colley, Texas Wesleyan, kcolley@txwes.edu; Jim Sernoe, Midwestern State University, jim.sernoe@mwsu.edu

Hot Topics Liaison: John Jenks, Dominican University, jjenks@dom.edu

Commission on the Status of Minorities: Lona Cobb, Winston-Salem State University, cobbl@wssu.edu

Special Promotions: Kay Colley, Texas Wesleyan, kcolley@txwes.edu

aejmc chicago

Get out of the classroom more

Pre-conference focuses on innovative teaching ideas

This year's SPIG Pre-Conference Workshop will offer participants innovative ways to get out of the classroom and take their students with them. The Tuesday afternoon workshop, "Getting Out of the Classroom: Teaching Innovations for Journalism and Mass Communication," takes place Tuesday, Aug. 8, from 1 to 5 p.m. Registration is \$20.

The four-part workshop focuses on high-impact student learning through community engagement, reporting on the anniversary of World War I, political communication and the 2016 election, and shaking the stigma of "activism" to get students writing stories about social justice issues. Here's a closer look at each of the four segments and the SPIG members involved in presenting them:

1 p.m. Community Engagement Workshop

Employers are seeking graduates who can work independently, have a track record of producing high quality work and can contribute to the team starting on day one. What better way to prepare students than through community engagement? This workshop shares case studies and best practices for cultivating community-engaged projects. Develop an outline for your next community engagement project with feedback from panelists and workshop participants. Guidelines and handouts provided.

Moderator/Presiding: Vivian Martin, Central Connecticut State
Panelists: Sonya DiPalma, UNC Asheville



Kay Colley, Texas Wesleyan
 Carrie Sipes, Shippensburg

2 p.m. Finding & telling WWI stories when the soldiers are gone

With the 100th anniversary of the United States' entry into World War I (April 4, 2017), and observances of the end of the war upcoming (Nov. 11, 2018), now is the time for journalists to start gathering information about local troops' actions in the war, wartime service, as well as activities on the home front and antiwar actions. All these stories need to be told without a living soldier or nurse to tell his or her own story in person.

The panelists have teamed up with the Connecticut State Library to tell veterans' stories of World War I. Learn about archival national sources, how to conduct oral history interviews with service members' descendants and how students can sift through archival material to find good angles to war stories.

Moderator/Presiding: Sonya DiPalma, UNC Asheville
Panelists: Cindy Simoneau, Southern CT State
 Jodie Gil, Southern CT State

3 p.m. Experiential learning in political communication

During the 2016 election year, journalism professors found opportunities for experiential learning that brought once-in-a-lifetime opportunities to their students -- and unique organizing challenges for themselves. Learn from their experiences in the political melee of an election year, in particular, how to remain flexible in the face of obstacles and unforeseen events when doing something you have never attempted before.

Moderator/Presiding: Doug Mendenhall, Abilene Christian
Panelists: Carrie Buchanan, John Carroll
 Israel Balderas, Palm Beach Atlantic
 Jill Van Wyke, Drake
 Michael Ray Smith, Lee

4 p.m. Shake the stigma: Communication education for social justice

This panel seeks to de-stigmatize "activism" and offer pedagogical strategies for teaching students to apply their communication knowledge and skills to address injustices in society. Panelists will describe their methods for enabling students to engage with marginalized communities and activist groups to tell stories that matter and have an impact on society. Emphasis will be given to methods that help students analyze practices and structures that maintain oppression, as well as techniques for assisting students to design communication interventions to address them.

Moderator/Presiding: Carrie Sipes, Shippensburg
Panelists: Dawn Francis, Cabrini
 Jerry Zurek, Cabrini

aejmc chicago

How SPIG panels are born

It's nearly time to propose the next round of topics

By Sonya DiPalma
 SPIG Vice Head and Research Chair

Panel proposals are quite competitive in the Small Programs Interest Group. As an interest group within AEJMC, SPIG receives three programming chips. Since it takes one chip to sponsor a panel or a competition such as Great Ideas for Teachers, we actively seek co-sponsors to expand panel opportunities.

For fall 2016, 13 panel submissions were received representing approximately 42 panelists. With our co-sponsorship for the highly visible and much appreciated Great Ideas for Teachers (GIFT) competition, this leaves SPIG with 2.5 chips remaining for five co-sponsored panels, making your

chances of being selected as a finalist a little less than 3:1.

So, what happens with the panel topics not selected? For the last several years, SPIG has offered a pre-conference workshop incorporating great panel topics that most often didn't have co-sponsors. Pre-conference workshops do not require a programming chip and can provide up to four additional panel opportunities.

If you're a new SPIG member, this may be a lot to take in. Please don't hesitate to ask questions.

Tips for submitting a successful panel proposal

Network: Most divisions and interest groups seek out co-sponsors for panels during the conference. So, networking is invaluable.

Get a Co-Sponsor: Secure a co-sponsor for your panel topic so it

can be submitted with your panel proposal.

Select a Panel Type: We have three panel types: Teaching, panel research, and Professional Freedom and Responsibility or PF&R. We strive for a balance among the three panel types. For 2017 we have one panel discussing research, two panels on teaching and one panel focusing on PF&R. You can find more on PF&R [here](#).

Choose a Good Topic: Identify a topic that is timely as well as evergreen. Panel topics are submitted in the fall semester, but need to be relevant for the next year's conference.

Provide Panel Lineup: Include all panelists and the moderator with their school affiliation. Submitting a proposal with possible panelists isn't as strong as having confirmed panelists who are vested in the topic.

spig panel schedule

Wednesday August 9, 10-11:30 a.m.

Great Ideas for Teachers (GIFT)

Lead Division/Interest Group: CCJA
 Co-sponsor: SPIG
 Panel Type: Teaching

Thursday August 10 – 11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.

Challenges of Writing 101: A pedagogical research panel

This panel uses research to address a pedagogical challenge that has re-

peatedly surfaced in conference attendee discussions over the past few years. Even among veteran literary journalism professors, there seems to be concern about students' declining writing skills and how (or even if) we can address that in our classes and assignments.

To tackle this challenge, we started with results from an online survey conducted in Spring 2017 with IALJS, SPIG, and Magazine Division members—about professors' experiences teaching basic writing to literary journalism students. Next, we dove in a little deeper by offering specific case studies. Finally, in a discussant section, we examine some of the fundamental assumptions underlying this panel.

Lead D/IG: MAGD Magazine Media
Co-Sponsor: SPIG
Panel Type: Panel Research

Panelists: David Abrahamson, Northwestern
 Calvin Hall, North Carolina Central
 John Hanc—New York Institute of Technology
 Mitzi Lewis, Midwestern State
 Kevin Lerner, Marist

Moderator: John Hanc, New York Institute of Technology

1:30 – 3 p.m.

Out of the shadows: Recruiting to small programs

Strategies to recruit students to small communication arts programs when nearby universities offer more

See **SCHEDULE** on page 6

spig panel schedule

Continued from page 5

resources and state-of-the-art technology. Ideas for how to “sell” the small program to prospective students.

Lead D/IG: SPIG
Co-sponsor: CCJA
Panel Type: PF&R

Panelists
Toni Albertson, Mt. San Antonio
Michael Longinow, Biola
Donna Bertazzoni, Hood
Alan Goldenbach, Hood

Moderator
Liz Atwood, Hood

3:15-4:45 p.m.

Mixed messages: Strategies for teaching classes geared toward both journalism and PR students

This panel will give advice on how to teach communication courses that are geared toward both journalism, public relations and marketing students. In small programs, courses are frequently geared to a variety of communication students with career aspirations ranging from journalism to public relations and marketing. This panel aims to give advice on how to create lectures and assignments that will serve diverse audience of students even when their intended careers have different codes of ethics, legal constraints and audiences.

Lead D/IG: SPIG
Co-sponsor: CCJA
Panel Type: Teaching

Panelists
Toni Albertson, Mt. San Antonio
Ginny Whitehouse, Eastern Kentucky
Jim Sernoe, Midwestern State
Alan Goldenbach, Hood

Moderator: Liz Atwood, Hood

5-6:30 p.m.

Breaking the cycle of burnout for minority

professors: Coping in the present and advocating for the future

Minority professors often find themselves alone in their departments. As reported in Time Magazine in 2015, “Among degree granting colleges that receive financial aid from the U.S. Department of Education, 17 percent of full-time undergraduate students are black, compared with nine percent of professors. At the same 4,313 schools, 12 percent of students are Hispanic, compared with four percent of faculty.” As the only representative of their minority group, professors at all levels may sometimes feel overcome with students of similar backgrounds constantly seeking their advice. This situation can lead to burnout, as minority faculty tend to perform disproportionate amounts of mentoring and service work in an attempt to balance their professional needs/expectations with their desire to guide students who look to them as models. However, since this additional service goes unrecognized, oftentimes these demands are too much to bear for minority faculty, leading to eventual resignation and a loss of diversity within the academy. To speak to this issue, this panel proposes to discuss the need to support and retain those minority professors who are already in the academy. By edifying those who have already been recruited, we will allow for diversity to build. Soon they won’t be alone. Panelists from various career stages in the academy will discuss their experiences about diversity and offer tips for minority professors to avoid feeling isolated and overwhelmed.

Lead D/IG: PRDV
Co-Sponsor: SPIG
Panel Type: PF&R

Panelists
Vivian B. Martin, Central Connecticut
Hua Jiang, Syracuse
Nathian Shae Rodriguez, San Diego State
Jack Ryan, Gettysburg

Moderator: Rowena Briones Winkler, University of Maryland

Friday

August 11,
12:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
at Volare, 201 E Grand Ave

Ginger Rudeseal Carter Miller Teacher of the Year Award

Adam Maksl, assistant professor of journalism at Indiana University Southeast

5:15-6:45 p.m.

Getting religion, getting ethics: Analyzing film as a pedagogy tool about doing good with a faith perspective

The teaching of media ethics and the teaching of religion (perhaps as a vehicle for understanding the origins and implications of good and evil in moral decision-making) get a boost in the minds of Millennials when the concepts can be tied to film clips or entire films devoted to the struggle. “Spotlight” is a prime example. Yet faculty using this medium find it a challenge to separate fact from fiction as they transition from analysis of cinematic concepts to the ambiguities and difficulty of day-to-day journalistic experience. Come hear this panel’s take on the advantages and drawbacks of film as a leaping-off point for guiding students into critical thinking, ethical decision-making and confrontation of their own perspectives and choices.

Lead D/IG: SPIG
Co-sponsor: RMIG
Panel Type: Teaching

Panelists:
Rick Clifton Moore, Boise State
Michael Longinow, Biola
Sonya DiPalma, UNC Asheville
Paola Banchemo, Alaska Anchorage

Moderator: Tamara Welter, Biola

7-8:30 p.m.

Members meeting

spig teacher of the year

TOY winner Adam Maksl to be honored at Friday luncheon

Creativity, commitment are priorities for top teacher

By Elizabeth Atwood
Hood College

Adam Maksl, an assistant professor of journalism at Indiana University Southeast, is the 2017 winner of the Ginger Rudeseal Carter Miller Teacher of the Year Award.

Maksl teaches mass media writing, social media strategies and media law classes and is the adviser to the student newspaper at his university.

The judges noted this year’s strong applicant pool, but singled out Maksl for his range of teaching skills and creative assignments.

“What an incredibly diverse and organized skill set,” one judge noted. “Perfect for the uncertain, but, ultimately, demanding future.”

Maksl said he is honored to receive the award. “Teaching in a small program presents unique challenges as well as opportunities for creative innovation,” he said. “I’ve tried to be creative in how I work with students to engage with them to foster passions for journalism and media. I am deeply humbled to be recognized for that work, especially by SPIG’s



Adam Maksl is an assistant professor at Indiana University Southeast.

amazing teachers who truly understand the uniqueness of teaching in a small program.”

In his statement of teaching philosophy, Maksl wrote that he

tries to empower students to direct their own learning and to learn through experience and community.

“Committed educators motivate students to want to learn beyond the classroom walls,” he said. “This is especially important when training professional communicators to go into jobs of the future.”

The Ginger Rudeseal Carter Miller Teacher of the Year award, named for a former SPIG president and long-time group proponent, honors a SPIG member who demonstrates excellence in teaching and advising.

Maksl will receive the award at the SPIG Teacher of the Year luncheon on Friday, Aug. 11, at Volare restaurant, 201 E Grand Ave. in Chicago, from 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Volare is within easy walking distance of the AEJMC convention site and has hosted SPIG before.

All SPIG members are invited to the dutch-treat event. Watch the SPIG listserv for more details about payment options.

This year’s menu (selected with a little help from honoree Adam Maksl) is built around a chicken-and-pasta entree, *Ravioli di Ricotta alla Salsa di Pomodoro* and *Pollo alla Picatta*.

State your business!

Have a topic of concern to place on the agenda for the annual SPIG Business Meeting, which will convene at 7 p.m. on Friday of AEJMC

week? Pass it on to Doug Mendenhall (doug.mendenhall@acu.edu).

The meeting is open to all SPIG members. One item of business will be to elect a new slate of officers, so current officers listed on

page 3 are asked to email incoming Head Sonya DePalma (sdipalma@unca.edu) to say if they prefer to remain in their position or see someone new placed on the ballot for 2017-18.

research competition

Cross-disciplinary topic brings first place to Pace researchers

Top 3 SPIG papers will be presented in Chicago

By **Dave Madsen**
Morningside College

Eight papers were accepted for review in this year's SPIG research competition. Those papers were peer-reviewed, and the top three will be presented in the Scholar-to-Scholar poster session at AEJMC in Chicago on Thursday, Aug. 10, at 1:30 p.m.

First place was awarded to Paul Ziek and Katherine Fink of Pace University for their paper "The Trifecta: Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration Among Journalism, Public Relations and Video Production Students in a Simulated

First-place abstract

The Trifecta: Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration Among Journalism, Public Relations and Video Production Students in a Simulated Environment • Paul Ziek, Pace University; Katherine Fink, Pace University

Communications disciplines in higher education use experiential learning to bring together theory and practice. However, experiential learning settings often lack opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration. This paper describes a simulation, dubbed "The Trifecta," which brought together students in journalism, public relations, and video production courses to produce multi-platform communications in a fictional municipality. Students were then surveyed. Results show that the students learned about all three disciplines, and began to understand nuances about forming cross-disciplinary relationships.

Environment."

Second place went to Youngah Lee and Christa Burkholder from Ball State University. Their research is titled "How to Communicate University Reputation: In-depth Interviews of Parents to Understand Their Perceived University Reputation and Communication Behavior."

Authors Robert Byrd and Pamela Denney from the University of Memphis received third place for their paper "Using Their Own Voice: Learning to Tell Stories with Instagram."

The competition was coordinated by SPIG Research Co-Chairs Jackie Incollingo from Rider University and Dave Madsen from Morningside College.

Second-place abstract

How to Communicate University Reputation: In-depth Interviews of Parents to Understand Their Perceived University Reputation and Communication Behavior • Youngah Lee, Ball State University; Christa Burkholder, Ball State University

This study conducted in-depth interviews with 29 parents of prospective college students, who are a target public of university marketing efforts. We explored how university communication influenced parents' attitudes, reputation perception, and communication behavior. The research findings are most relevant to small and medium-sized universities as they have less marketing budget, but their strong organizational identity and culture communicated through the internal stakeholder's experience can significantly influence prospective parents' favorable cognitive and behavioral intentions.

SPIG research by the numbers

Papers submitted: **8**

Papers disqualified: **1**, for identifiers present

Papers blind-reviewed: **7**

Qualified papers accepted for presentation: **3**

Percent of qualified papers accepted for presentation: **42.9%**

Percent of submitted papers accepted for presentation: **37.5%**

Reviewers: **9**

— Jackie Incollingo, Rider

Third-place abstract

"Using Their Own Voice": Learning to Tell Stories with Instagram • Robert Byrd, University of Memphis; Pamela Denney, University of Memphis

This study explores the use of Instagram as a storytelling platform in journalism education. A post-only quantitative and qualitative questionnaire was used to assess an Instagram storytelling assignment in university reporting courses. The key findings include the overall success of the assignment in requiring students to creatively tell stories while problem solving in the field. Students completing the assignment honed skills in photography and interviewing as well as posting compelling stories to Instagram. These multimedia skills are critical in today's media organizations.

in the classroom

Teachers can take extra steps with first-generation students

We can help unstack deck with attention to the details

By **Michael A. Longinow**
Biola University

Some students fail. Some drop out. We all know that. And even if we're way too busy to see it or too curmudgeonly to care, we're getting emails from our dean or the provost saying we need to find ways of helping students succeed.

Part of that outreach for success is to students for whom the college or university experience is a first, not just for them but for anyone in their family. First Gen students in our courses can be a challenge, particularly when they come from inner-city schools and racial minority homes. True, some do well: They write using clear, grammatical sentences; they read syllabi and take initiative on assignments; they never miss class. But for many, all the above are very difficult. And it's partly our fault. We can do better.

First Gen students from racially diverse backgrounds in the U.S. comprise a [wave](#) of potential enrollees who are looking to get into

colleges and universities. They're [not](#) flocking to career preparation in journalism, media or public relations. That's partly because they or their parents aren't convinced there will be jobs waiting for them that will pay off loans. A bigger problem, though, is that when they take the risk and enroll any-

way, they don't see enough people behind the podium who look like them or share their culture.

Research by the Cox Center at the University of Georgia in [2015](#) showed that faculty from racial minority backgrounds (with the exception of Asian faculty) lag far behind what the percentage should be based on U.S. census data for the U.S. population. Faculty of Black or Hispanic origin are either not coming to our schools or are not staying long. Mercedes Lynn de Uriarte, a former *L.A. Times* reporter and editor, now at the University of Texas, wrote in 2004 that integration is not the same as diversity. Faculty of color know it; our students of color know it.

Students look around the room and see few others of diverse backgrounds. And that's discouraging. Loneliness and isolation are key factors for students losing the will to keep up with school work, or even [stay enrolled](#). It's [worse](#) for students in distance-learning settings. But what compounds the problem is when students from minority backgrounds don't hear teaching that relates to their culture or cultural understanding. (Yes, I'm suggesting these students are socially constructing their own perspective of the curriculum and we need to admit that.)

Many students from minority backgrounds need convincing, more than our majority-culture students, that the

Loneliness and isolation are key factors for students losing the will to keep up with school work.

game we call higher education is one worth playing, one worth winning. The best of our majority-culture students learned the game in high-performing high schools or in well-run community colleges: how to read a syllabus and gauge its weight relative to other syllabi and a host of competing activities or a job. They picked up, at least conceptually, that good writing matters, that numeracy and data literacy are crucial to their careers, that reading before a quiz or exam matters and getting their work in on time is just normal.

So what do we do? Here's a bullet list of things that can help.

- Look for students of color in your classes. That's not favoritism; it's compassion. Learn their names; get to know their backgrounds. I do this through an early semester diagnostic paper called "My Life." In it, students have to tell me everything that's challenging besides school. It's the whine paper. And I learn a lot about who they really are. It helps me help them succeed. (I do try to learn the back story of every student on the roster.)

- Plug them in. Students from minority backgrounds sometimes aren't aware that involvement in the campus media or your departmental magazine matters. If the staff are mostly white, they might not feel like trying. Introduce them to the editors. Help them pitch a story or photo.

- Look for danger signs. When a minority student in your class isn't showing up, isn't putting forth effort, or gets shut down because of student comments that margin-

See **STUDENTS** on page 10

member milestones

Honors, retirements & more

SPIG Head **Doug Mendenhall** is a finalist in the commentary/blog category of the Religion Newswriters Association for his weekly column written for the [Abilene Reporter-News](#).



Mendenhall

Doug is an assistant professor at Abilene Christian University in Texas.

Kim Fox, associate professor at The American University in Cairo, recently received a grant from [AMICAL](#) for an audio diaries podcasting initiative in Cairo, Egypt. The goal is to teach students, faculty and staff to



Fox

produce audio diaries and donate the audio diaries to the university's digital archives. Fox will collaborate with colleagues to create templates for other universities to utilize in addition to creating an online platform to display the produced content. The funding will be used to purchase equipment and train students to produce audio content. (Photo by Kevin Broome)

Cathy Yungmann has retired from

Cabrini University after 33 years of teaching video production, multimedia storytelling and video news production, and is now Professor Emerita. She will continue teaching the Communication Department's senior honors capstone course on an adjunct basis. This is the class that has produced award-winning websites about social justice topics for several years, including [ServingFoodSolutions.com](#), [YouthVoicesRise.com](#) and [AmericanWealthInequality.com](#). Cathy previously has received an AEJMC SPIG Scholarship of Application Award and an AEJMC Teaching Committee's Best Practices Award for Teaching with Tools and Technologies.



Yungmann

Past SPIG Head **Pam Parry** has left Eastern Kentucky University and will become Chair of the Department of Mass Media at Southeast Missouri State University effective Aug. 1. Her new email address is pparry@semo.edu. She also



Parry

has a new book that has just been published by Rowman & Littlefield, *Coping with Gender Inequities: Critical Conversations of Women Faculty*. (Photo by Reggie Beehner)

Carrie Buchanan of John Carroll University in Ohio has been elected president of the Society of Professional Journalists' Cleveland Pro Chapter for 2017-18. The chapter recently won SPJ's national award for best communications, with the email newsletter that Buchanan edits, *Writer's Week*, one reason for the award.



Buchanan

On the research front, Buchanan's comparative study of three competing hyperlocal news outlets, as well as a question she asked related to her research, attracted attention at the conference "Is No Local News Bad News?" at Toronto's Ryerson University in June. The Ryerson conference had a team of journalism students write about top speakers beforehand, post during the conference on its [website](#) and social media, and follow up on stories that arose during the conference – a model for other conferences to follow. (Photo by Peggy Turbett)

How to keep FirstGen students

Continued from page 9

alize (or ignore) minorities, don't just let it go. Step in. Reach out. In lower division courses, I set up mandatory office meetings. It's an excuse to get eyeball-to-eyeball with students about the class. For those on the margins, I keep it low key and listen a lot. I want them to know I'm not the enemy.

- Bring in guest speakers who are people of color: cops, district attorneys, working reporters, edi-

tors, photojournalists, public relations agency directors. The benefit isn't just for your students of color; it shows your majority-culture students how diversity is alive in professions.

- Find ways of pointing students of color to successful journalists or professionals in media or PR who share their ethnic or cultural background. It doesn't have to be in class (an email or a comment on a paper is enough). Hook students of color up with shadowing or in-

ternships with those professionals where you can.

- Encourage faculty of color in your department or in departments that collaborate with you. And do it in ways that reach into the struggle they feel as a person unlike the majority culture of your college or university. It's a collaboration that can have wide-reaching results. (And, of course, be a voice pursuing more hiring of faculty and administrators of color in your school.)