



ASJMC

Administrator

The Newsletter of the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication | April 2014

ASJMC Voting to Begin for 2014 Officer Election



Loup Langton



Jan Slater

ASJMC's 2014 Officer Election will be held April 14 through May 14.

Members eligible to vote will receive an email on April 14 that will link them to ASJMC's ballot.

Deadline for voting is May 14. Election results will be announced in the next issue of *ASJMC Administrator*. Biographical profiles of all candidates may be found on ASJMC's website, asjmc.org.

Ann Brill, Kansas, will be installed as 2014-15 president during the ASJMC Business Meeting Friday, Aug. 8, 1:45 to 3:15 p.m., during AEJMC's Montreal Conference. Brad Rawlins, Arkansas State, will become president-elect. Candidates for vice president are Loup Langton, Western Kentucky, and Jan Slater, Illinois. The person elected vice president will automatically move into the president-elect's position in 2015-16, and president's position in 2016-17.

The association will fill two seats to the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications during the election. Candidates for the seats are Cheryl Bacon, Abilene Christian; Dorothy Bland, North Texas; Paul Parsons, Elon; and Thor Wasbotten, Kent State. Continuing ASJMC representatives to the Council are Pam Luecke, Washington & Lee; and Raul Reis, Florida International.

Two candidates are running to represent large-sized programs on the ASJMC Executive Committee. Candidates are Birgit Wassmuth, Kansas State, and Michael Wirth, Tennessee. The candidate receiving the most votes will serve on the Executive Committee for three years.

The slate is presented by the ASJMC Nominations Committee: Peggy Kuhr, Montana (chair); Doug Anderson, Penn State; and Beth Barnes, Kentucky.

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A Note from the President



Education and Student Awards

I'm probably not unlike most administrators. When students win awards for their work,

it makes me happy. But in the years I have been teaching and now helping manage programs, I have also witnessed some things that make me not so enthusiastic about student awards.

For those of us who came out of the journalism world, we probably witnessed and might have participated in efforts to win awards that were not always in the best interest of our audience or our duty as journalists. Newspapers put together special teams to try to win Pulitzers, covering topics often not driven by a compelling issue they have uncovered in their community, but simply to try to receive the distinction of winning the award. In television some stations would hold excellent stories for awards weeks, weeks where you were asked to sample newscasts for awards competitions. I know at times journalists would seek out a specific topic simply because it matched an award category. All of these can be seen as ways to “game” the system to increase the chances of winning a journalist or journalism organization an award and accolades.

The ethics involved in some of these practices I think are suspect, but in my view, taking these practices into the classroom, where we model behavior for students, is unacceptable.

Some of these practices would include

- finding talented freshmen who display strong abilities early and offering them coaching and grooming with the aim of winning an award as they progress;
- having students repeat the same job over and over in a newscast-producing class so that the product is flawless, not to help the students learn, but to produce an award-winning show;

- and coaching students in how to prepare for in-the-field reporting involved in the finals of one particular competition to increase the students' chance of winning.

I suspect there are others.

The issue with these is this: Do we really have the best interests in mind of every student in our program? Coaching or pulling students out for special treatment undermines the idea of giving each student an equal opportunity to excel. In fact, any steps we take that undermine good teaching and learning to me can never be justified for any award.

Perhaps we as administrators could consider drawing up and committing to our own code of ethics, one that outlines best practices and discourages “gaming” awards competitions.

I have some suggestions for award competition administrators as well. For instance, does it serve an award best to restrict the competition to any certain group of schools, i.e., accredited programs? The Pulitzers do not restrict which news organizations can enter, nor do the Emmys. If it's truly a student competition seeking the brightest and best, shouldn't any student be eligible, no matter the program? Full disclosure — I represent a program which has not sought accreditation. In regard to judging panels, has every judge done field work, shot photos, written stories, shot and edited videotape recently? Or are they executives far removed from the craft they are judging? Do judges themselves have institutional ties? Are entries blind-judged? If not, they should be — judges should not be able to see what institution a student comes from. This would help avoid any potential conflict of interest or bias.

I contend that student awards are best when they foster and enhance student learning and when they do not encourage bad practices on behalf of programs. As an administrator, I have had the attitude that if faculty and students want to enter awards competitions, I will gladly support their efforts. But these efforts can never usurp excellent teaching and student learning.

— Don Heider, Loyola University of Chicago

ASJMC Sessions Scheduled for 2014 Montreal Conference

Tuesday, August 5

- 5:30 to 9 p.m. — Pre-conference Leadership Workshop (Elon/LSU/Scripps Howard Foundation)

Wednesday, August 6

- 1:30 to 3 p.m. — Becker Survey Release
- 5 to 6:30 p.m. — Future of Journalism Panel (Society of Professional Journalists)

Thursday, August 7

- 7 to 9:45 a.m. — ASJMC Exec Committee
- 1:30 to 3 p.m. — Reimagining Accreditation
- 5 to 6:30 p.m. — DSA Session

Friday, August 8

- 1:45 to 3:15 p.m. — ASJMC Business Meeting
- 3:30 to 5 p.m. — “Teaching Hospital” J-Grants (Online News Association)

More information on hotel and Conference registration may be found on the Conference website: aejmc.org/events/Montreal2014



IPR President to Receive 2014 Sass Distinguished Service Award



The 2014 Gerald Sass Award for Distinguished Service to Journalism and Mass Communication has been awarded to Frank Ovaitt, president and CEO of the Institute for Public Relations (IPR). Presentation of the award will take place Thursday, Aug. 7, 5 to

6:30 p.m., during the AEJMC Conference in Montreal, Canada; this will be followed by a panel discussion led by Ovaitt.

The Sass Award is given annually by ASJMC to pay tribute to outstanding achievement and service to the field of journalism and mass communication.

IPR is a nonprofit foundation that has focused its efforts at studying “the science beneath the art of public relations.” It has funded and distributed dozens of studies on measuring public relations, ethics, trust, managing relationships, social responsibility and other valuable topics.

Academics as well as professionals have published their research on the institute’s site, and IPR makes all of this information free to all. Several of these publications have been used in dozens of classrooms and have even helped create research agendas for young faculty.

Ovaitt was nominated by Brad Rawlins, dean of the College of Communications at Arkansas State University. “Frank is serving his second time as president and CEO [of IPR]. He is a consummate professional and is passionate about improving the education and training of public relations ‘professionals,’” Rawlins noted in his nominating letter.

Previously, Ovaitt was executive vice president for Makovsky + Company and managing director of Cross International Inc. He helped clients implement mergers, create re-brandings, and carry out other critical changes for new corporate objectives. He also has been an adjunct professor in the George Washington Graduate Program in Strategic Public Relations.

Accreditation Update

CHEA RECOGNITION

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) provides oversight of higher education accreditation. In January, CHEA renewed its recognition of ACEJMC after a one-year deferral. During that year, all ACEJMC-accredited programs had to post retention and graduation data and other indicators of student achievement on their websites. Every program did so by the deadline. In addition, ACEJMC clarified procedures for international programs seeking accreditation and clarified the meaning of provisional status. A future issue is whether CHEA will require accrediting bodies to require compliance on all standards to be fully accredited.

INITIAL ACCREDITATION

Four U.S. universities are seeking initial ACEJMC accreditation this year: Loyola New Orleans, City University of New York, University of Idaho and Cal State Long Beach. Two more U.S. universities have asked for site visits for initial accreditation next year: Stony Brook University and the University of North Alabama.

INTERNATIONAL INTEREST

Four JMC programs outside the States currently are accredited by ACEJMC: two in Puerto Rico and one each in Chile and Qatar. A fifth hosted a site visit this year and will soon be considered: Tecnológico de Monterrey in Mexico. Three more international programs have applied for site visits next year: Zayed University in the United Arab Emirates, Anahuac University in Mexico, and American University in Dubai.

ACCREDITATION WORKSHOP

When the Accrediting Council offered a one-day workshop in 2012 to assist administrators with the accreditation process, more than 75 participants came. ACEJMC plans to do it again. The one-day workshop is scheduled for Thursday, Aug. 21, at The Westin in Chicago.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

Accredited programs have been required for some years to track and analyze retention and graduation rates and to include the data in their self-studies. As noted above, CHEA now expects accredited programs to publish this data online and update the data annually. How programs do this is up to them, and the depth and style of public accountability is not specified. If interested, see examples here: http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/STUDENT/Public_Accountability.SHTML

80/65 BECOMES 72

The curriculum revision on outside-the-unit courses is now in effect. Instead of requiring 80 or more credit hours outside the accredited unit, with at least 65 of those hours in the liberal arts, the new requirement is simply 72 hours outside the accredited unit. This is in response to units saying they needed more credit hours in the major and that minors such as business should not be difficult.

— *from Paul Parsons, Elon*
Feb. 25, 2014

ASJMC 2013-14 Executive Committee

President, *Don Heider*, Loyola University of Chicago • **President-elect**, *Ann Brill*, University of Kansas • **Vice President**, *Brad Rawlins*, Arkansas State University • **Past President**, *Peggy Kuhr*, University of Montana • **Publication Committee Chair**, TBA • **Executive Committee**

Representatives, *Mary Arnold*, South Dakota State University; *Cheryl Bacon*, Abilene Christian University; *Lorraine Branham*, Syracuse University • **ACEJMC Representatives Chair**, *Paul Parsons*, Elon University • **AEJMC President**, *Paula Poindexter*, University of Texas at Austin • **BCCA Representative**, *Rochelle Ford*, Howard University • **Executive Director**, *Jennifer McGill*, AEJMC/ASJMC