

# MME *Record*

Newsletter of the Media Management and Economics Division of AEJMC

Winter 2003

Number 41

## MME plans successful convention at Dec. meeting

by Randy Beam, Division Vice Head and Program Chair

Arrive early. Stay late.

That's our advice if you want to take full advantage of the Division's program at this summer's AEJMC Convention in Kansas City. Plans for the convention were arranged at a recent meeting in Palo Alto, Calif.

Pre-convention activities begin on July 29 with a workshop on broadcasting research. This is the second year that the Media Management and Economics Division has sponsored this program in conjunction with the Broadcast Education Association. Most other MME activities are scheduled on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of the convention, with a final panel on Saturday.

The convention begins with a focus on us. We have scheduled back-to-back sessions on Wednesday morning that focus on teaching journalism students about media management and economics.

The first session, co-sponsored with the Internship and Careers Interest Group, explores what journalism and mass communication students should know about the business of journalism. The second session focuses exclusively on the development of media management curricula at the graduate and undergraduate levels.

The Division is co-sponsoring two mini-plenary sessions. On Wednesday afternoon, panelists promise to produce a "report card" on the state of civil, individual and social liberties in 2003. The Newspaper Division is organizing this session. On Friday, researchers from Indiana University-Bloomington and representatives of the Knight Foundation will present results of the fourth "American Journalists" survey. This national study, done every 10 years, examines the characteristics, attitudes, values and work-place (**Convention**, cont. page 2)

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## I see skiing in your future –

If you meet **Dec. 15** deadline for the Boulder Midwinter Conference

The Media Management and Economics Division is co-sponsoring a Midwinter Conference to be held at the University of Colorado at Boulder from Feb. 28 to March 2. Other participating divisions include Radio-Television Journalism, Comm Tech and Policy, Visual Communication, Graduate Education, and Internship and Careers. The program is still being developed and will include a mix of panels and paper presentations.

Paper abstracts of 500 words or less must be postmarked or e-mailed by Dec. 15. E-mail is preferred. If e-mailed, only one copy is necessary. Otherwise, people should send four copies with no identifying information on three of them.

### SEND RESEARCH PAPER ABSTRACT TO:

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## Convention (cont.)

concerns of about 1,300 U.S. journalists. The Mass Communication and Society Division and MME will be organizing this program.

Here's what's on the MME convention program:

### Wednesday

- "What journalism students need to know about the journalism business," co-sponsored with Internship and Careers Interest Group, 10 a.m.
- "Curriculum development at the undergraduate level vs. the graduate level in an era of media convergence," 11:45 a.m.
- "Managing television stations in the new media marketplace," co-sponsored with the Radio-Television Journalism Division, 1:30 p.m.
- "State of freedoms, 2003: A report card on civil, individual and social liberties," co-sponsored mini-plenary, 3:15 p.m.
- Competitive research session, 5 p.m.

### Thursday

- "Fundamental issues and trends in media strategy

research," co-sponsored with the Public Relations Division, 11:45 a.m.

- "After the fall: Careers in advertising and public relations," co-sponsored with the Internship and Careers Interest Group, 3:15 p.m.
- Competitive research session, 5 p.m.
- MME business meeting, 6:45 p.m.

### Friday

- MME executive board meeting, 7 a.m.
- "A world view of media convergence: Fact or fiction," 8:15 a.m.
- Scholar-to-scholar research session, 11:45 a.m.
- "The American journalist in the 21st century," co-sponsored mini-plenary, 1:30 p.m.
- Competitive research session, 3:15 p.m.
- Competitive research session, 5 p.m.

### Saturday

- "Will communication policy preserve localism and diversity?" co-sponsored with the Communication Technology and Policy Division, 1:30 p.m.

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## Two special editions of JMM need submissions

The International Journal on Media Management has two special editions that need submissions. The Spring 2003 edition is called "The Future of Convergence." The 1990s were dominated by the belief that the concept of convergence would eventually result in a small number of large transnational corporations dominating the communications industry. However, the results of some of the most aggressive attempts to achieve communication industry convergence have been less than successful to date. The purpose of this issue is to provide a forum for papers focused on the future of convergence in light of the economic, financial, managerial, technological and regulatory realities of today's marketplace. Analytical papers focused on the future of convergence are invited by the submission deadline of January 30, 2003.

The Summer 2003 edition is "Company Leadership in Media Sector." Media enterprises are confronted by significant challenges due to convergence, globalization, the entry of new content providers and instability in established media markets. In this uncertain environment, leadership is critical in guiding firms and success and failure of media enterprises. The topic of this issue reflects the movement of attention

from the external environment school of strategic management to that of the resource-based school in which the knowledge, characteristics and capabilities of internal resources are seen as critical to success of companies. This issue will focus on the roles of leadership and top management in media firms, exploring issues and aspects of leadership and its exercise through theoretical perspectives, case studies, and company comparisons. The submission deadline is March 30, 2003.

For more information about submitting, check out the following web pages: <http://www.mediajournal.org/modules/issue/view.php?id=14> or <http://www.mediajournal.org/modules/issue/view.php?id=15>

JMM is also looking for sharp-penned reviewers of new books. A list of books available for review is at: <http://www.mediajournal.org/files/cms/18.php>



# Audience, focus and teaching media management: Some thoughts

by Ken Killebrew, Vice Teaching Chair

When thinking about this article, the goal was to focus on the different expectations instructors have concerning the content of Media Management courses. Jerry Condra succinctly arranged the arguments of the various listserv speakers in the fall newsletter. But it still begs three questions. 1. How should we teach media management courses? 2. Where should we focus material? 3. Who should be the audience? The answers to the second and third questions are the keys to answer the first question. This shifts the original focus from instructor expectations to student needs.

Understand that there may be significant differences in courses that are called media management or media economics and those which link both terms. Classroom approaches vary with how we define our courses. Here the discussion is on media management.

Regardless of our perspective on how media management courses should be built, it is likely that we bring in examples of good business practices, peppered with media professionals to underscore the positive aspects of those practices, and generally some discussion on media as organizations. There is also likely to be a bit of management theory, ethics and more than a few case studies thrown in for good measure. If this is what we teach (with a great deal of variability in style and substance), who should we assume is the audience?

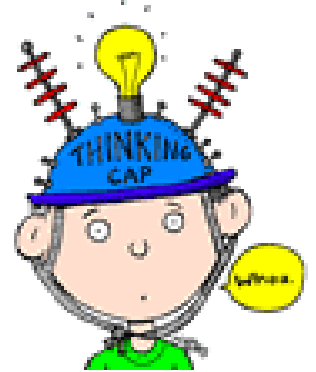
On the other hand, we may teach about joining the workplace, understanding fellow employees, and realizing how to function in a media environment. This also may include a number of case studies outlining appropriate workplace behavior, management styles and systems, and a few self-discovery exercises for students. Again, the class may include theory and ethics. If this is what we teach, then who is our audience?

And what of those who teach both in a single class?

The general discussion, from my perspective, should not be what is taught, but about the emphasis of what is taught to whom. Audiences vary and so should course instruction. We really should be identifying the needs of the students and focusing our efforts on meeting those needs.

The focus of my undergraduate course is on the student's ability to live and prosper within the media systems they will encounter. The course is built to facilitate their understanding of the functions of management in a way that will make them better employees and help them to understand how their bosses (good and bad) make decisions in order that they may

get ahead in the media business. As new graduates, they will encounter a landscape in the media that is generally different from the one they have seen at the local burger joint while working their way through college. And their position will be dramatically different (even if the pay is probably about the same).



The focus of my graduate course is on management decision-making and the potential outcomes of those decisions. Problem solving and implementing change are also strong components of the course. It examines the motives of workers and supervisors and how the media “fit” into the business world. Students do in-depth analyses of business operations and report on the status of various aspects of the media “industry.”

Interestingly, the actual material covered in the two courses is nearly identical. Sure, there's a bit more global emphasis at the graduate level and a bit less decision-making at the undergraduate level, but the content is essentially about media management. It is the focus that changes. At the undergraduate level it is about understanding how the boss thinks and the media business works. At the graduate level it is about understanding how to be a better supervisor and deal with problems in appropriate decision-making models. Both classes are exposed to the realities of “convergence.”

Many of our media management textbooks cover all phases of management and allow the instructor to tailor the course. This is as it should be. Our real task is seeing the changes and challenges in the workplace, and translating those into language our students will understand. Textbooks can rarely cover those situations well; the business is too varying to pin down for very long.

Perhaps this is too simple an explanation for most of us. But the fact is that students need to understand their field, not just their skills. That is our entrée in this great media world. Regardless of whether they are beginners or journeymen, they need to be well informed and the workplace may not be the best teacher. The more tools we can give them to work better, interact with others more appropriately, and deal with individual and organizational issues, the better. It's as easy (or not) as that.