

**Religion and Media Interest Group
Annual Report, 2017-2018**

Standing Committee of the Religion and Media Interest Group

Head:

Rick Clifton Moore
Boise State
rmoore@boisestate.edu

Co-Vice Heads:

Mariam Alkazemi
Gulf University for Science and Technology
mfalkazemi@vcu.edu

Greg Perreault
Appalachian State
greg.perreault@gmail.com

Research Chair:

Brian Bowe
Western Washington
brianj.bowe@wwu.edu

PF&R Chair:

Michael Longinow
Biola
Michael.longinow@biola.edu

Newsletter Editor:

Andrew D. Pritchard
Iowa State
apritch@iastate.edu

Membership Chair:

Cecile Holmes
South Carolina
holmescs@mailbox.sc.edu

Teaching Chair:

Vicki Knasel Brown
Missouri
Vkddk7@mail.missouri.edu

Please provide an overall statement weighting the division or interest group's activities for this year in the Research, Teaching and PF&R areas. The new assessment process recognizes that the relative weighting of these three activities will be different from year to year, but over the five-year reporting period, the three areas should receive generally balanced attention.

Generally, our approach to these three aspects of our mission have not changed. We continue to show roughly equal division to each.

Please write a bullet-point statement (500-word maximum), to be co-authored by the outgoing and incoming Heads, addressing:

*** What are your most important goals for the upcoming year?**

Our most important goal for 2018-2019 is to increase overall member involvement in the interest group. The recent pattern of behavior in RMIG is to have the head, vice-head and research chair do a lot of the heavy lifting. For the next year, we'd like to begin a "culture shift," so to speak, and broaden the number of people who have regular obligations to meet the group's objectives.

Having two or three people do the work for a body that has close to one hundred members makes no sense. For example, the teaching chair can help organize or suggest two co-sponsored teaching panels. The professional freedom and responsibility chair can organize two co-sponsored panels and write for our newsletter. The research chair should write one contribution to the newsletter.

We also want to continue to strive for high quality reviewing during our conference paper submission process. The outgoing head will be working on this, in coordination with the new (2019) research chair.

*** What goals did your group set this year that you were unable to reach? Why?**

We feel that we continue to succeed in outreach to members via our newsletter and Facebook page. The vice-heads of the organization and the newsletter editor worked diligently to gather and organize content that would be of interest to our constituency.

One of our goals was to increase membership. We did achieve a slight uptick, going from seventy-nine in August 2017 to eighty-eight in June 2018. We have been encouraging members to be watchful for scholars who appear to study in our area, but not be active RMIG members.

An additional goal for this year was to increase paper submissions. Similar to our goal for membership, we did achieve positive results, even if the change might not be considered significant. For the 2017 conference we had 23 submissions. For 2018 we had 26. (More information on conference submission and acceptance is provided below.)

*** How may any or all of the Standing Committees help you to achieve your goals in the coming year?**

Given the nature of our first goal for this next year, we don't feel like help from the Standing Committees is needed. We might change our minds as we work on this process, though.

Regarding the continued improvement in paper reviewing, we may be conferring with the Standing Committee in that area for some advice.

RESEARCH

Each Division/Interest Group is assessed based on diversity in participation and programming. A primary goal of the Research Committee is to enhance the scholarly activities of AEJMC. Brian Bowe, RMIG research committee chair, has submitted the following report:

RMIG had a total of 26 papers submitted.
Our overall acceptance rate was 48%.

Number of faculty research paper submissions 13; number of acceptances 6 (46% acceptance rate)

Combined Faculty-Student paper submissions 5; number of acceptances 3 (60% acceptance rate)

Number of student research paper submissions 8; number of acceptances 4; (50% acceptance rate)

We followed the All-Academic review system as suggested by the Council of Divisions.

Total number of judges: 28; Most judges read 3 papers each.

Total number of reviews per paper: Minimum of 3.

We conducted a refereed paper competition. Based on the scores each paper received from the judges, we awarded top paper and second paper awards in both faculty and student categories.

Please list your conference activities related to research.

We are sponsoring three research panels.

Enumerated, they are as follows:

1. Refereed Paper Session

RMIG Top Paper Session

Moderating/Presiding

Brian J. Bowe, Western Washington

Papers--

Media as Religion: Practices of Mediation in a Catholic Community
in South India*

Subin Paul, Iowa and Deepika Rose Alex, Jawaharlal Nehru University

The God Card: Strategic Employment of Religious Language in U.S. Presidential
Discourse**

Ceri Hughes, Wisconsin-Madison

True Believers, Poseurs, and Becoming “Woke”: Portrayals of Religion in Netflix’s
*Orange Is the New Black****

Erika Engstrom, Nevada-Las Vegas and Joseph Valenzano, Dayton

What Would Jesus Do in Cyberspace?****

David Scott, Utah Valley

- * Top Student Paper Award Winner
- ** Second Place Student Paper Award Winner
- *** Top Faculty Paper Award Winner
- **** Second Place Faculty Paper Award Winner

2. Refereed Paper Session

Contemporary Issues in Religion and Media

Moderating/Presiding

Mariam Alkazemi, Virginia Commonwealth

Papers--

No Compassion for Muslims? How Terrorism News About Muslim Victims Influence
Emotions and Policy Support

Desiree Schmuck, Jörg Matthes and Christian von Sikorski, University of Vienna

A Multi-method Approach to Examining Online Sermons from Religious Organizations

Jordan Morehouse and Daniel Riffe, North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Religion and the Media: A Study of Student Perception of Media Bias in Georgia

Elizabeth Johnson-Young and Alexander Clegg, Washington and John Guidon,
University of Mary Washington

Framing the Death of Cardinal Law

Giselle A. Auger, Rhode Island College

3. Invited Paper Session

“Forecasting Avenues for Religion and Media Research”

Moderating/Presiding

Gregory Perreault, Appalachian State

Panelists

Guy Golan, South Florida

Debra Mason, Missouri

Kimberly Meltzer, Marymount

Sahar Mohamed Khamis, Maryland

Discussant

Mariam Alkazemi, Virginia Commonwealth

4. Scholar-to-Scholar Refereed Paper Research Session

An Analysis of the Rise and Fall of “The Boy Who Came Back from Heaven”

Jim Y. Trammell, High Point

Effective Intercultural Workgroup Communication Theory: The Impact
on Church Dynamics

Stephen Kabah, Regent

Terrorism News Coverage and Attitude Towards Islam: Does Following
Terrorism News Cultivate Opinions about Muslims

V. Michelle Michael, Ohio

A Longitudinal Analysis of the Linguistic Tone of American Churches Online

Doug Mendenhall and Lani Ford, Abilene Christian

“In the World, Not of It: Exploring Evangelical Christian Women’s Negotiation
of Meaning Within a Shared Community

Jennifer Huemmer, Ithaca

Please list your out-of-conference activities related to research.

RMIG shares research news (e.g., conference, paper calls, fellowship and job opportunities, etc.) via its various communication channels to members. This consists of a Facebook page and a Wordpress website. Its members are also very involved in reviewing and publishing in the *Journal of Media and Religion*.

TEACHING

It is in the interests of the students we are training to be taught by faculty and led by administrators who have given thoughtful consideration to excellence in curricular matters, course content and teaching methods, and teaching performance. To this end, the Teaching Committee of AEJMC urges divisions and interest groups to include activities concerning curriculum, leadership, course content and teaching methods, and assessment.

Please list your in-convention activities related to teaching. Describe how these activities fulfill one or more of the Teaching Committee's focus on curriculum, leadership, course content and teaching methods, or assessment.

We are offering an off-site tour of religion-related sites in DC. This has developed to be a tradition with our interest group. The idea is to devote a day helping professors and media professionals better understanding religion, especially the diversity of American religion.

The schedule for the 2018 tour is as follows:

9 a.m. — Meet in Renaissance Hotel lobby

9:15 a.m. — Arrive at the national offices of the Council for American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)

10:15 a.m.—Arrive at the Newseum, for a discussion with the museum's Religious Freedom Center staff

11:30 a.m.—Arrive at the Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism

12:15 p.m. — Lunch

1:30 p.m. . — Arrive at the national offices of the Church of Scientology

2:30 p.m.—Arrive at the National Cathedral

4:00—Back to Renaissance Hotel

Please list your out-of-convention activities related to teaching. Describe how these activities fulfill one or more of the Teaching Standards Committee's focus on curriculum, leadership, course content and teaching methods, or assessment.

Most of our teaching-related activities occur through our newsletter and Facebook page. As an example, one recent article in the newsletter emphasized current events that have been covered (to varying degrees) in the news media that have strong religious dimensions and are appropriate for class discussion to better understand how media cover religion.

Further, the research activities and co-sponsored panels emphasize issues that are important for students to understand when covering religion. For example, one of our panels consists of compassionately covering religious conflict. In 2017, we had panels on religious literacy. In our panels, we aspire to discuss teachable moments from professionals, as well as teaching tools for academics.

PF&R

Each year the PF&R Committee expects some programming both during the conference and between conferences in at least three of the five PF&R areas to meet minimal expectation. Over a period of a few years, divisions and interest groups should have activities in all five areas. A few activities of high quality are preferred and evidence that helps assess quality is helpful.

It is important to fully explain the division or interest group's role in organizing a session or panel. Suggested notations: division planned, division was primary or secondary sponsor, division sent out a special paper call on the topic, division provided names for panelists, etc.

Please list your in-conference activities related to PF&R. Describe how these activities fulfill one or more of the PF&R Committee's focus on free expression, ethics, media criticism & accountability, racial, gender and cultural inclusiveness, or public service. Include a list of non-member invited conference speakers with names and affiliations.

RMIG co-sponsored three PF&R panels for the 2018 conference.

Enumerated, those are as follows...

1. Demystifying the Academic Job Market

(Co-sponsored with the Mass Communication and Society Division)

Moderating/Presiding

Gregory Perreault, Appalachian State

Panelists

Brian Bowe, Western Washington

Michael Longinow, Biola

Jack Karlis, Georgia College

2. Don't Ask Me That: Using Compassion in Covering Religion Amid Conflict

(Co-sponsored with the Electronic News Division)

Moderating/Presiding

Mike Longinow, Biola

Panelists

Peter Morello, Missouri-Kansas City

Andrea Scott, *Military Times*

Kim Lawten, *Religion & Ethics Newsweekly*

Kellie Stanfield, Salisbury

Chad Curtis, Kansas

3. Faith in the Beltway: Creating and Maintaining Community Bonds through Religious-Themed

News Organizations

(Co-sponsored with the Community Journalism Interest Group)

Moderating/Presiding

Joel Campbell, Brigham Young

Panelists

Hannah Monicken, senior writer, *Washington Jewish Week*

Michael Clay Carey, Samford

Mark Zimmerman, editor, *Catholic Standard*

Minhaj Hasan, editor, *The Muslim Link*

Vicki Brown, Missouri

Tom Strode, correspondent, *Baptist Press*

Please list your out-of-conference activities related to PF&R. Describe how these activities fulfill one or more of the PF&R Committee's focus on free expression, ethics, media criticism & accountability racial, gender and cultural inclusiveness, or public service. Please describe briefly PF&R goals and activities of your group. Such description may include discussion of primary accomplishments, programming diversity, special competitions, faculty/student research awards, newsletter activities and other activities.

Most of our work in this area is carried out via our newsletter and Facebook page, where we share information with members about how both media producers and consumers can contemplate the power of media in communicating the importance of faith in people's lives. For example, on our Facebook page we linked to a story on "America's first hijabi TV reporter."

General Information

Please attach copies of the newsletters sent by your group this year (or provide a link where they can be downloaded), and any other material you wish us to note.

Andrew Pritchard served as newsletter editor and published the winter and spring issues. The website is typically <http://www.religionandmedia.org/>. I just tried checking it on June 22, 2018 and it seems to be down. However, it has been operational for some time. This seems to be a minor glitch.

RMIG also manages a Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/ReligionandMediaInterestGroup/>

Financial Report

While not required, in the spirit of transparency here is the current financial status of RMIG.

Beginning Funds for Current Fiscal Year: \$2,227.19

Income: \$695.58

Expenses for This Fiscal Year: \$40

Available Funds as of 6/15/18: \$2,882.77*

* Some of these funds will be expended for the DC pre-conference tour (transportation costs, mainly).