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Election Coverage on Campus

cmreview.org/election-coverage-on-campus/

College Media Review

October 11, 2012

College journalists can and should cover the presidential race: Here's how

By Sarah Maben and Dan Malone

Barack, Mitt, Paul and Joe. Their names are all over professional newsfeeds regarding the U.S. presidential election.

If their names aren't part of college media newsfeeds, they could be. The student press corps has an arsenal of tools to cover the 2012 presidential campaign and election night with relative ease and very little money.

"To prepare journalism students for the media world they are entering, I think it's essential to have them cover election night in real-time," said Jake Batsell, adviser to smudailycampus.com at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. "Election night provides journalism students with a perfect laboratory to perform under real-time pressure during a major news story."



Illustration: League of Women Voters



Photo by Peter Clark. Used with permission.

Today's readers expect results as quickly as possible, Batsell said. And through social media and other technology, student journalists can deliver just that. Students, for example, can cover local watch parties and tweet the news moment by moment. They can also stream videos from polling places as live feeds on UStream.

The SMU team used a variety of methods to cover previous elections in real-time. One tactic was to simulate a live blog by simply updating an election Web page with time-stamped entries throughout the night. Their page (<http://www.smudailymustang.com/?cat=576>) is a multimedia mix run as a chronology on the page.

SMU students have also used a more automated system like CoverItLive. At the time SMU used it, CoverItLive was a free service. Now, packages are sold to handle the expected traffic. ScribbleLive is a similar service student journalists might consider using.

While all of the coverage options are inspiring, college journalists, like their professional counterparts, need to plan election coverage in advance, including what hashtag they'll use.

"Selecting a hashtag in advance is important so you can promote it before your election coverage," Batsell said. SMU used #smuelex.

Live-blogging an event requires more than just a reporter and an iPad, even if the reporter is a digital native. Students should be encouraged to practice on smaller campus events before election night. This will help work out the bugs, and advisers can offer constructive criticism on the previous live-blogs.

Student journalists can study such previous election live-blogs as <http://trailblazersblog.dallasnews.com/2012/07/live-blog-election-night-coverage-of-texas-senate-runoffs.html> or <http://www.texastribune.org/texas-politics/2012-elections/liveblog-runoff-election-results> for ideas.

Tools and story ideas from now until Nov. 6:

1. **Candidate tracking:** Use an interactive mapping system like Google Fusion to track the candidates' locations. Have reporters follow and interview candidates from a major campaign as they whistle-stop through your area.
2. **Tweet of the day:** For a quick ongoing feature, select the tweet of the day for each candidate. (You can use topsy.com to collect tweets and other social media mentions. Monniter is another useful site.)
3. **Follow the \$\$\$:** Report on the money behind the campaigns by reviewing financial disclosure statements candidates are required to file. Share copies of the statements with your readers through DocumentCloud. Who's raising the most? How are they spending it? See what patterns emerge in the numbers and create a graphic to share with your readers.

4. **Voter's guide:** Assign students to individual candidates for short pre-election profiles and answers to questions, and then publish an online voter's guide. For easy collection of the information, consider a Google Doc form that can be emailed to candidates to fill in online. In the end, you would have all the data in one spreadsheet you could export.
5. **Vet the resumes:** Assign the same students to vet each candidate's resume. Annotate a document with notes about how each piece checked out (or didn't) and upload to your web site. Student journalists could also check the background of candidates with public data aggregators and or city, county, state records. A how-to feature might interest readers who would like to vet candidates themselves.
6. **Registration drives:** Report on voter registration drives, such as Rock the Vote, and investigate what's being done to make sure people registering voters are actually turning in voter registration applications. Create an online counter that reflects the number of voters registered and update weekly. Follow your county's election official(s) in Twitter and Facebook.
7. **The big interview:** Shoot for the moon – request interviews from Romney and Obama campaigns with candidates. You don't know what's possible until you ask. Offer unique ways to conduct the interview, like a Twitter chat, Google Hangout or live-blog. Both campaigns will want to appear tech-savvy and college-student friendly. Even five questions with key officials in the campaign would be a coup. Freelance writer Kathryn Jones suggests looking for "guest commentators" such as former presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. You might look for your school's alumni in government positions who might be likely to respond to your requests.
8. **First-time presidential voters:** What issues are the candidates addressing of the most concern to college students, many of whom have never voted in a presidential election before. Jones points to national studies that show voter apathy among young voters such as college students. She suggests polling the students on your campus: do they plan to vote? If not, why and what are the implications for that lack of involvement in the political process. Facebook or Twitter are options for social media polling. Or, research and write an explanatory feature about what the candidates are doing to get out the young vote in your area.



Illustration courtesy League of Women Voters

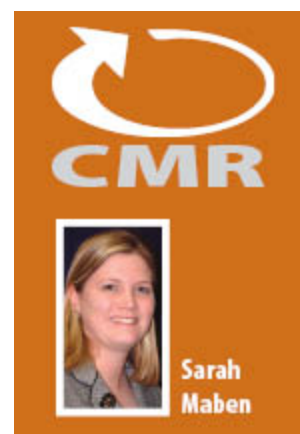
Day, night coverage on Nov. 6: Excellent experience for college press

During the day on Nov. 6, student press corps can use social media and technology to:

1. **Interview exiting voters and live-blog:** Students can download a live-blog app on their smartphones and tablets, go to polling places to interview exiting voters and election officials, and then live blog about turnout. Have a poll question to ask voters as they leave the booths that you can post on Twitter or a live-blog. Maybe it is “Do you plan to share how you voted in social media?” Or tie in to a question asked in this Pew research study: <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/2343/social-media-influence-politics-liberals-democrats-politics-news-election>
2. **Ask political science profs to join reporters in Google Hangouts for video session:** Instead of a quick phone call to the local political experts or political science professors to analyze results, college media could ask these individuals to join them in Google Hangouts for a video session. Reporters have the option of making these sessions public and automatically feeding them to a YouTube channel.
3. **Stay in contact with local and state election officials:** Someone on a news staff should stay in contact with election officials throughout the day to stay abreast of allegations of voter fraud or irregularities.
4. **See what people are saying by geographic location:** Programs like Adaptive Path’s iWitness shows tweets and flickr updates by time and location down to a street address. College journalists could also set up a Four Square check-in to track how many users check in. (Let’s hope no “mayor” emerges, or “vote early and often” might take on a new meaning. At least you would have a juicy story!)


5. **Keep an eye out for watch parties:** Check for any virtual watch parties like tweet ups—or host a bi-partisan tweet-up watch party as a way to engage readers and have them help tell the narrative. For physical watch parties, students should go to the headquarters of major campaigns in your area; they would cover reaction to the votes as they are counted and get reaction to outcome when the last votes are tallied. Another idea, courtesy of Jones, is to follow events like the one Microsoft is setting up—live Xbox town halls with hosts such as Chelsea Clinton.
6. **Do distributive reporting:** Partner with another campus news outlet in your state's capital or even Washington D.C. You can share video or provide analysis for each. Industrious students might even set up a collaborative network for the night or a universal hashtag to aggregate all of the college media news for Election Night.
7. **Present interactive maps:** Use Google Fusion to identify polling places for voters. You could even update the maps to reflect the length of lines at the polling places. If voters know about this service beforehand, they could check them before venturing out to vote. Or simply give polling wait time updates via live-blog, Facebook and Twitter.
8. **Select tweets of the day:** For a quick ongoing feature, select the tweet of the hour for each candidate.
9. **Profile polling volunteer, ask a question every hour:** Identify a unique polling place volunteer you could interview intermittently throughout the day, answering one question every hour.
10. **Seek Instagram voting pictures:** Ask the news outlet's social media followers to share Instagram voting pictures that you can use to build a photo story or scrolling photo album.
11. **Storify It:** As a sidebar to your reporting, use Storify to curate your social media followers' comments into a reader-generated narrative.

Dr. Sarah Maben and Dan Malone are assistant professors at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas. They help students run Texan News Service, a wire service for an eight-county region in Central Texas, a daily news broadcast, and a quarterly regional magazine.





A Matter of Access to Sporting Events

 cmreview.org/a-matter-of-access-to-sporting-events/

College Media Review

December 17, 2012



Student and professional journalists dealing with restrictions on sports coverage

By Frank D. LoMonte

Executive Director, Student Press Law Center

Fueled by billions in television and licensing revenues, college athletic departments are increasingly stiff-arming journalists by restricting access to practices and games. Meanwhile, media industry leaders are looking for ways to respond.

The start of football season in August 2012 brought a wave of new restrictions on journalists—professionals and students alike—who cover college athletics. Threatening to revoke press credentials or close practices, coaches at several schools, including the University of Southern California, Washington State University and the University of North Carolina, ordered journalists to refrain from reporting on player injuries observed during practices.

In recent years, colleges and athletic conferences have become increasingly assertive about controlling how media organizations use the information and images they gather at sporting events.

The Southeastern Conference's standard media credential, for instance, prohibits the sale for profit of any photo that includes recognizable athletes or coaches, and prohibits anyone other than a broadcast news outlet from posting online any game-action video other than video clips provided by the conference. The NCAA maintains – and colleges have occasionally threatened to enforce – limitations on the frequency with which blogs (including Twitter feeds) may be updated with game action in order to prohibit “live blogging” that might draw viewers away from officially licensed telecasts.

In response to these restrictions, the Student Press Law Center and leading organizations representing the professional news media, including the American Society of News Editors and the Associated Press Sports Editors, have formed an informal working group to exchange information and to advocate for better access policies.

“First, and foremost, sports events are big news,” said attorney Kevin M. Goldberg of Fletcher, Heald & Hildreth, P.L.C., who represents ASNE on these issues. “Not just in terms of reader interest, but in many cities and towns around the country, especially those with a large university presence, they can often be the biggest business or social issues as well. Second, the restrictions being levied are so outrageous that they simply demand a response.”

“These issues will become more complex and difficult to manage going forward,” Goldberg said. “Sports teams, leagues, venues and events, at the professional, college, high school and local levels are trying to harness technology in ways that make them competitors to the local news outlets, effectively cutting out the local media. They are seeking not only to control the message but commercial aspects of that message as well. They are learning from each other, talking to each other and occasionally working with each other to perfect these restrictions.”

While public universities are governed both by the First Amendment and by open-meetings laws that grant the public a right of access to government activities, there is no clear legal basis on which to demand unfettered access to sporting events.

Public-access laws cover only “meetings” where government policy is deliberated or decided. The fact that an event takes place inside a publicly financed stadium is not, by itself, a basis for claiming a “right” to attend. A government agency can restrict access by issuing credentials, and can impose and enforce reasonable conditions for receiving credentials.

Courts have held that the First Amendment does provide a right of access for journalists to observe important government activities, such as criminal trials and official police activity occurring in public spaces. It is questionable whether a court would recognize a constitutionally based right to insist on sideline access to a football game.

Once access is granted, it cannot be selectively revoked for retaliatory reasons, such as when a journalist expresses a viewpoint contrary to the government’s. And government agencies cannot selectively discriminate only against journalists. They cannot, for example, enforce a policy that enables fans in the bleachers to shoot and share video freely but restricts journalists from doing the same.

Most sports teams specify that ticketholders may not rebroadcast any game action, though it is questionable how that can be enforced. It’s also not clear whether live-blogging or live-tweeting restrictions will actually hold up in court if they’re challenged legally. However, news organizations should consider whether they are willing to forfeit their credentials while being a “test case.”

There are no known cases of media organizations actually losing credentials for providing live-blogging coverage, but the closer the coverage gets to a literal play-by-play description of events in real time, the more likely it is to draw a reaction. If threatened with the loss of credentials, journalists on the scene would probably be best advised to:

- Immediately involve a sports editor or editor-in-chief.
- Avoid a potentially heated on-the-spot argument that distracts from covering the event.
- Go along with the sports organization’s requests—thereby defusing the confrontation—by agreeing to post fewer blog updates or changing their vantage points on the sidelines.
- Carefully document which official made what threats; this documentation would be important for any legal challenges that could arise.

Student journalists have a particularly strong argument for leeway, since they, just like the student athletes they are covering, are in college to receive training and prepare for careers. A college that uses its authority to de-credential and expel student journalists is both harming the college audience and harming the career preparation of the students it hopes to place in professional employment.

Journalists who have issues with access to sporting events – including restrictions on what they can post online when covering sports – are encouraged to report concerns to the Student Press Law Center at splc@splc.org or 703-807-1904. The SPLC is building a

database of sports access issues in collaborating with the ASNE and other professional media organizations, to assist in identifying the restrictions that trouble journalists most frequently and that are most in need of reform, whether by regulators or by the courts.

First Amendment Mileposts in 2012

 cmreview.org/first-amendment-mileposts-in-2012/

Lisa Lyon Payne

December 20, 2012

Four noteworthy First Amendment cases for college media in 2012

By Frank D. LoMonte

Executive Director, Student Press Law Center

With the 25th anniversary of the Supreme Court's landmark Hazelwood ruling approaching on Jan. 13, the College Media Review asked the Student Press Law Center's executive director, Frank D. LoMonte, to take stock of the state of free expression rights on college campuses – which, as LoMonte notes, “is a frequent source of litigation, as courts try to make sense of a shifting and sometimes muddled area of First Amendment law.”

During 2012, courts decided four particularly noteworthy cases directly bearing on the legal rights of student journalists and bloggers – including one especially significant case recognizing that the Constitution can protect advisers as well as students against retaliation by public institutions.



(1) **Ward v. Polite** (6th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals, January 27, 2012)

The Supreme Court's 1988 ruling in *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier*, which greatly reduced the First Amendment protection of college students' speech when they use “curricular” channels of communication provided as part of school instructional activities, continues expanding far beyond its original scope – and the 6th Circuit's decision in *Ward* is the latest illustration.

The *Ward* case involved an Eastern Michigan University student enrolled in a practicum course to prepare for a career as a counselor. The student, Julea Ward, told her instructor during a private meeting that – because of her religious opposition to homosexuality – she was uncomfortable accepting a referral to counsel a student struggling with issues of sexual identity, and would prefer to reassign the student to a more supportive counselor.

Eastern Michigan responded by convening a disciplinary panel that kicked Ward out of the counseling program, on the grounds of conduct incompatible with the professional standards of the counseling field.

Ward claimed – and in a 3-0 ruling, the 6th Circuit agreed – that she could demonstrate a violation of her rights by showing that other students had been allowed to reassign referral cases for reasons other than religion, so that EMU was discriminating against students with strong religious beliefs.

But in reaching that conclusion, the three-judge panel decided (for the first time in the 6th Circuit, which covers Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee and Kentucky) that administrators at colleges as well as K-12 schools can exercise the *Hazelwood* level of control over their students' speech. "The key word is student," the court held. "*Hazelwood* respects the latitude educational institutions—at any level—must have to further legitimate curricular objectives."

Hazelwood permits schools to censor student speech for any "valid educational purpose," including their belief that the speech is "ungrammatical, poorly written, inadequately researched, biased or prejudiced." Based on the way lower courts have deferentially applied the *Hazelwood* level of protection in the K-12 context, it is almost impossible for a censored student to prevail once speech is deemed to be governed by *Hazelwood*, no matter how weak the school's rationale.

The impact of *Ward* on the college media is far from settled. In a prior ruling that was not even acknowledged in the *Ward* opinion, *Kincaid v. Gibson*, the 6th Circuit ruled that a college yearbook was not subject to the *Hazelwood* level of censorship

With the decision in *Ward*, the Sixth Circuit is now the fourth of the 12 geographic U.S. circuits – joining the 7th, 10th and 11th – in holding that college as well as K-12 students are entitled to only the minimal *Hazelwood* level of First Amendment protection for "curricular" speech. Only the Boston-based 1st Circuit has said otherwise with clarity, and that was only a passing mention in a footnote.

The *Ward* ruling reinforces the importance of obtaining state-level legal protections for the rights of college journalists, and – where possible – securing the binding commitment of colleges themselves to refrain from applying the *Hazelwood* level of editorial control.

(2) ***Moore v. Watson*** (U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois, March 13, 2012)

After the 7th Circuit became the first court in the country to apply the *Hazelwood* legal standard in the context of a college journalistic publication (*Hosty v. Carter*), outraged Illinois legislators responded with one of the nation's strongest "anti-*Hazelwood*" statutes, the Illinois College Campus Press Act.

In *Moore*, that act was put to the test for the first time – and it passed with flying colors.

Adviser Gerian Moore and student editor George Providence were removed from their positions at Chicago State University's student newspaper, *The Tempo*, after the paper published articles questioning school practices, including inquiring into questionable

spending on a high-priced concert. They sued under both the College Campus Press Act and the First Amendment, alleging unlawful retaliation.

A federal district judge found that, although the scope of advisers' First Amendment rights is murky due to their status as government employees, the College Campus Press Act made Moore a "participant" in the public forum of *The Tempo*, so that he could assert a violation of his own rights as well as those of his students. The court had little difficulty concluding that the newspaper's controversial editorial content was the cause-and-effect reason for the punitive actions against Moore and Providence, and ordered Moore reinstated at his previous salary, with his personnel record cleansed.

Although the court also found Providence's rights were violated, no relief was ordered, because Providence was no longer eligible to reenroll in Chicago State and was not in a position to suffer future censorship at CSU's hands.

(3) ***Tatro v. University of Minnesota*** (Minn., June 20, 2012)

Although not involving journalistic speech, the *Tatro* case is important for the rights of all student Internet users – both for what the court decided, and also for what it did not decide.

In *Tatro*, a college mortuary-sciences student was caught joking on her personal Facebook page about the corpse she was assigned to dissect, and about stabbing her former boyfriend with a dissecting tool. Although campus police concluded that the student, Amanda Tatro, posed no genuine threat, she was brought up on charges before a campus disciplinary board and punished.

The University of Minnesota's legal counsel – in an argument that would have virtually wiped the First Amendment out of existence for college students in Minnesota – tried to convince the court that Tatro's speech on Facebook was subject to control under the *Hazelwood* "curricular speech" standard because it reflected unfitness for her chosen course of study.

The justices did not buy that argument. They did, however, uphold the university's punishment on much narrower grounds.

In a 5-0 ruling, the court decided that colleges may lawfully punish speech that violates "established professional conduct standards" – in Tatro's case, the failure to speak respectfully about corpses – even if the speech does not rise to the level of disrupting class or inciting others to lawlessness.

The state court precedent is binding only in Minnesota. But because it represents perhaps the first appeals-court case anywhere analyzing the scope of First Amendment protection for online speech by college (as opposed to K-12) students, the ruling may be influential in other jurisdictions.

There are obvious risks to journalists if it becomes accepted that colleges may punish “unprofessional” speech, so advocates – including students – will need to closely watch their student conduct codes for the introduction of “professional conduct standards” language as a basis for disciplinary action.

(4) **OSU Student Alliance v. Ray** (9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals, October 23, 2012)

Finally, a federal appeals court in California decided that top university administrators can be held personally liable for enforcing an unconstitutional policy that selectively restricts the distribution boxes of particular student publications from campus.

The OSU Student Alliance case dates back to Christmastime of 2004, when editors of a conservative alternative newspaper at Oregon State University, *The Liberty*, noticed their newsracks disappearing. All seven *Liberty* bins – and 150 copies of the newspaper – were found in a university dumpster.

Maintenance workers claimed to be acting under OSU’s physical plant manager to enforce an unwritten – and previously unenforced – “beautification” policy. But *Liberty* editors proved that other boxes for competing newspapers were left standing in comparable locations.

A federal district judge threw out the newspaper’s First Amendment claims, but on a 2-1 ruling, the Ninth Circuit reinstated the case and sent it back to the district court for trial.

There are two bottom-line takeaways of importance to the college media. First, the placement of newsracks at a public college is a protected First Amendment act, and colleges can regulate distribution locations only if they act under established standards that prohibit picking-and-choosing among publications based on their editorial content. Second, high-level supervisors – even the college president – can be held to account for unconstitutional restraints on the distribution of news, even if they have no personal involvement in the censorship decision, if it can be proven that they knew of the censorship and continued enforcing the unconstitutional policy anyway.

Frank LoMonte, executive director of the Student Press Law Center, is a commercial litigation attorney who joined SPLC after practicing with the Atlanta-based law firm of Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP and clerking for federal judges on the Northern District of Georgia and the Eleventh Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals. Before law school, LoMonte was an award-winning investigative journalist and political columnist in state capitol bureaus in Florida and Georgia and in Washington, D.C., with the Morris newspaper chain. LoMonte graduated magna cum laude from the University of Georgia School of Law, where he was a senior editor of the *Georgia Law Review*. The Student Press Law Center notes at **Student Press Law Center**, “Since 1974, the Student Press Law Center has



Frank LoMonte

been the nation's only legal assistance agency devoted exclusively to educating high school and college journalists about the rights and responsibilities embodied in the First Amendment and supporting the student news media in their struggle to cover important issues free from censorship. The center provides free legal advice and information as well as low-cost educational materials for student journalists on a wide variety of legal topics. In addition, the SPLC operates a formal attorney referral network of approximately 150 lawyers across the country who are available to provide free legal representation to local students when necessary. Approximately 2,500 student journalists, teachers and others contact the Center each year for help or information. Calls come from all 50 states and the District of Columbia."

Journalism major not necessarily required

 cmreview.org/journalism-major-not-necessarily-required/

College Media Review

December 20, 2012

Newsrooms at liberal arts schools tend to reflect the diverse backgrounds of the students

By Lisa Lyon Payne

Virginia Wesleyan College

A recent study of the current state of the college newspapers among liberal arts schools in the Southeast found that fewer than 40 percent of the editors at the Phi Beta Kappa institutions surveyed have a journalism program at their institution. Those students who contribute to their student newspapers come from a range of majors, including biology, philosophy, English, economics, American studies and international affairs.

It's not uncommon for liberal arts institutions that do offer journalism majors to either require or strongly encourage students to double major.

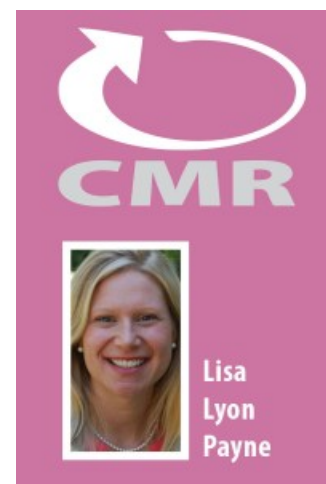
Miami University, a liberal arts school with about 15,000 students, changed its requirements about 10 years ago, requiring journalism majors to double major.

"We want our students to know a lot about everything," says Sacha DeVroomen Bellman, editorial advisor to The Miami Student at Miami University, adding that this breadth of knowledge is reflected in the publication the students produce.

Liberal arts students are typically involved in many other activities outside the newsroom, thus broadening the range of experiences from which the students draw. Bellman's editor from last year, for example, was active in Glee Club, and felt the student newspaper was not providing adequate coverage of the arts. He started an arts section that still exists today.

Melinda Rhodes, assistant professor of journalism at Ohio Wesleyan University, said OWU offers a journalism major, but students are strongly encouraged to double major. And the student newspaper reflects this philosophy.

"It's broad, it's deep and it's content heavy. We want the students to understand the systems in which they operate, to be familiar with philosophical and fine arts concepts, to understand methodologies in the social sciences and the sciences, to be able to learn new material and



acquire news skills whenever that might be necessary and to be committed to the concepts of citizenship and service. People should have exposure to other languages and frameworks for understanding collective history,” Rhodes, said.

A recent issue of OWU’s newspaper, The Transcript, included in-depth features of alternative farming and the controversial issue of psychotherapy on homosexual youth in addition to courts, cops and other more mainstream news topics.

The study of newspaper editors at the liberal arts schools found that the newsroom makeup also reflected the diverse disciplinary backgrounds of the students. Of 16 editors, only one said their newspaper’s staff was comprised only of journalism majors. Five said their institution did not have a journalism major. Ten editors said they draw from a broad range of student majors for their newspaper staffs.

William Ruehlmann, professor emeritus of journalism at Virginia Wesleyan College, said this is an ideal environment for a functioning student press.

“The liberal arts school provides a particularly rich background for a dynamic collegiate press, since the variety of student backgrounds and range of instruction there is effectively collected in a dynamic microcosm of the world beyond. A newsroom comprises the eyes, ears and voice of that vibrant academic community. It offers important witness and commentary that effectively prepares students to perform as alert, active, critical citizens after graduation,” Ruehlmann said.

But while multiple frameworks and student perspectives may provide for unique student newspaper content, the downside is that students may spend less time honing industry skills and trends, including technology. Of newspaper editors surveyed at liberal arts schools, more than one-third said their newspapers lacked online editions. Of the newspapers with online editions, the survey found that more than half do not update content on a daily basis.

While journalism pundits have speculated that daily print newspapers may cease to exist altogether within a decade, paper format for the college newspaper is still dominant. Some possible reasons for this phenomenon are the direct relevance of a college newspaper, the free price tag, and the notion that a college campus is one of the few remaining place with high pedestrian traffic and large amounts of leisure time.

Another reason college newspapers may be cleaving to the traditional print form of the student newspaper can be attributed to the difficulty student newspapers have experienced in developing a strong advertising base for the online versions of their publications; with the broader readership of the online newspaper comes the difficulty in convincing advertisers to invest in the medium.

Or, it may be a reflection of the deliberate curricular emphasis of liberal arts schools, which fundamentally resist increasingly specialized disciplines, including a focus on technology.

Rhodes said a liberal arts background should “provide the knowledge base for critical thinkers to enter an industry so often enamored of technology that the calling of journalism is lost.”

Rachel Satterwhite, a graduate of Virginia Wesleyan College, said her double major and her experience as editor-in-chief of the Marlin Chronicle gave her an advantage in her current position as a social media and SEO analyst for Advanced Protection Technologies. It's important, she said, for liberal arts programs to include ample instruction in technology in order to help prepare students for employment after graduation.

“My liberal arts education did teach me to ask questions, think more broadly, and work to solve problems. In a way, it taught me to be independent and work to get the desired results. In my job, I often have to figure out new situations on my own, so I think it has helped me with that. It also taught me that it's okay to ask questions in order to learn,” Satterwhite said.

However, Satterwhite also stressed, “Colleges and professors need to combine what they are doing now and the technology counterparts of the field. Employers are expecting fresh-out-of-college students to be tech savvy. So many people talk about the death of the newspaper and how journalism is dying. I don't agree. It is not a dying field, it's simply evolved with technology and is now online, in social formats, on mobile and on tablets.”

Lisa Lyon Payne is an assistant professor of communication at Virginia Wesleyan College in Norfolk, Virginia. She is also the faculty adviser of the VWC student newspaper, *The Marlin Chronicle*. Lyon Payne obtained her doctorate from the University of Georgia's Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication in 1999. She has a master's degree in communication from the University of Tennessee and a bachelor's degree from The College of William and Mary. She has also taught as an assistant professor of communication at Kennesaw State University in Georgia and has published works on crisis communication, reputation management and public relations theory development. In addition to her academic experiences, Lyon Payne has worked as a public relations consultant, research analyst, editorial assistant and writer. Outside of her academic endeavors, she enjoys tennis, the beach and time with her husband and two sons.

Transitioning from the professional newsroom to the college newsroom

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College Media Review

December 20, 2012

From professional reporters and editors to professional advisers: Veteran advisers share their stories

By Alexa Capeloto

John Jay College of Criminal Justice/CUNY

Jake Lowary says he loves advising The All State student newspaper and Monocle yearbook at Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tenn. But he recalls “a definite learning curve” moving from professional newspaper reporter to college media adviser nearly two years ago.

The curve can feel steep when reporters and editors become advisers.

On one hand, working with college media can feel like a natural extension of a journalism career. You pass on all the things you learned as a journalist to future generations, and stay connected to news production via a student newspaper, online publication or broadcast station.

On the other hand, professional journalists may have far less experience developing budgets, helping students craft media bylaws and attending campus meetings as an adviser and/or faculty member rather than as a reporter covering the meetings.

A Different Pace

Linda Villarosa, journalism director at The City College of New York, a city university in Manhattan, says she was used to barreling through tasks and assignments as an editor at *The New York Times*, executive editor of *Essence* magazine and in other journalism jobs.



Illustration by Colten Bradford, The UIS Journal



Now, as a professor, student media adviser and program director, Villarosa says she has to pace her work—and her expectations—to suit the world of higher education.

“This is a slow (moving) community of people,” Villarosa says. “You have to dial it down to get what you need. Journalism is very brash and outspoken; you just blurt out things and expect things to happen quickly.”

Lowary agrees, saying he was used to “a very aggressive, fast-paced sort of atmosphere” as a reporter at *The Leaf-Chronicle*, a mid-sized Gannett paper in Clarksville. At the university level, he says, “It’s not that way.”

“We have this idea that we’re going to do something (and then) we have 10 meetings over the course of three months, and (then) three months after that, it might come to fruition. It’s a very difficult concept for me to grasp,” he says.

Marla Krause spent 22 years as a reporter and editor at the *Chicago Tribune*. As at most large newspapers, deadlines were unrelenting, decisions were made quickly, and there was a multi-layered organization to handle the various pieces of any project.

Krause is now at DePaul University, a large Catholic university in Chicago, where she is a professor and adviser for *The DePaulia* student newspaper. She, too, has experienced the length of time a project can take in a college setting. It took about a year to establish more sites for DePaulia news-stands. A DePaulia marketing plan has been in the works for five years, about as long as Krause has been at the school. Even posting promotional posters, she notes, can be a process.

Keeping the “Student” in Student Newspaper

Of the transition from professional newsroom to student newsroom, Krause says, “When you’re an editor at a professional publication, certainly you’re doing a public service and the public has to trust you. But if you do make a mistake, you feel it’s your own reputation; it’s just you who would have to take the knocks.

“Whereas if something really bad happens to a student paper, you don’t want the students to get in trouble. I feel a great responsibility to teach them the right way to do things.”

But, at the same time, advisers need to remember it’s the students’ newspaper—not theirs, Krause adds.

Some advisers struggle to adapt to the hands-off-the-content approach adopted at many colleges. To go from doing journalism to advising and critiquing is harder than it might seem at first, they say.

“Keep One Foot in the Newsroom”

Paul Moses, a journalism professor and adviser at Brooklyn College, another city university in New York, says he fills that void by continuing to write and stay connected to professional journalism. Like a lot of advisers, he still considers himself a journalist and has learned to balance the two identities.

“Keep writing,” advises Moses, who spent 17 years at New York *Newsday* before joining the college in 2001. “Maintain your relationships in the business. I think that’s important for students. Keep one foot in the newsroom.”

Villarosa subscribes to the “teaching hospital model” that some are beginning to apply to journalism education. Like Moses, she believes journalism teachers should be practicing professionals, and should be as current in their skills and work as any future journalist is required to be.

Adviser Objectivity?

Moses also holds to the tenets of objectivity he practiced as a journalist. Mainstream news pros typically do not sign petitions, attend demonstrations, donate to political candidates or do anything else that might convey a bias, and he sticks to that as a professor and adviser.

“I just try to stay out of things,” he says, citing petitions and union work as examples. “For us it’s just force of habit, (but) the students also need some model of that kind of nonpartisan approach. It’s hard for them to adapt to that.”

Advisers take different views on this issue. Lowary, for one, felt the constraints of public neutrality lift when he became a full-time staff member of a university. He put a political bumper sticker on his car, he feels freer to voice his opinions on social media, and he’s open with his students about his political views.

“It’s kind of a strange theory that I can actually put a political sign in my yard now,” he says. “I always feel like I’m looking over my shoulder for having this sticker on my car, but it’s kind of liberating.”

Final Tips

Whether or not they embrace political advocacy, college media advisers quickly learn the importance of advocating for student journalists. Many advisers work with their students to arrange meetings with college administrators to explain how their media organizations work and what they seek to achieve.

Other advisers facilitate roundtables with local media professionals; such roundtables connect media companies and promising student journalists.

Another bit of advice to any new adviser is to stay nimble. As the professional media landscape undergoes a sea change, so too does the student media landscape.

Teaching and advising media, she says, are demanding and involve a three-pronged skillset: fundamental journalistic abilities that stem from professional experience, effective teaching and multi-media know-how.

Krause believes a successful adviser is one who stays focused on the needs and abilities of the students, whatever they might be.

“The students you are working with are just that. They’re students,” she says. “It’s different from when you’re working in a newsroom and you’re surrounded by people with years of experience. They’re learning.”

For that reason, Krause has three words of advice that her fellow advisers echo: “Patience, patience, patience.”

Here are some more specific tips for the journalist who is transitioning from a professional career to one in college media advising:

- 1) Join a Network: Connect with organizations like the College Media Association, Associated Collegiate Press and the Student Press Law Center to learn about the law and best practices of student media advising. You can begin with CMA’s New Adviser Handbook.
- 2) Write Your Role: Craft a job description for yourself if one does not already exist, and share with supervisors and students.
- 3) Write the Student Media Role: Work with students on a staff manual, style manual, mission statement and other written codes, if they do not already exist.
- 4) Hold the Red Ink: At least until after publication. An adviser guides students and critiques their published work. Prior review is generally discouraged for pedagogical and legal reasons.
- 5) Check Your Compass: Consider whether and how your personal code of ethics as a professional journalist should change as a media adviser.
- 6) Follow the Money: Even the math-challenged among us must learn about budgeting, ad sales and the other dollar-driven duties of any organization.
- 7) Connect with the College: Bring student journalists together with college administrators, PR people and other staffers to make clear the value (but also independence) of student media.

- 8) Connect with Local Media: Hold roundtables and other gatherings for media professionals and student journalists.
- 9) Keep Writing: Stay as engaged as possible with professional journalism by freelancing, blogging or other writing. Such work keeps you current as a teacher and adviser, but also feeds the journalist that never quite leaves us.
- 10) Stay Nimble: Be open to changes in your students or their work, such as a digital-first publication or redrawn staff structures, and be patient with the slower pace of higher education.
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Alexa Capeloto is an assistant professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice/CUNY in New York City. She teaches journalism, co-coordinates the Journalism minor and serves as faculty adviser for the student newspaper, The John Jay Sentinel. After earning her master's degree in journalism from Columbia University in 2000, she spent five years as a reporter and editor at the Detroit Free Press. In 2005 she joined the San Diego Union-Tribune as East County bureau chief. Two years later she was named the paper's enterprise editor, overseeing investigative, explanatory, trend and other enterprise stories. In 2007, while still at the U-T, she began teaching as an adjunct instructor of journalism at National University, a San Diego-based college aimed at mid-career students. She has been on faculty at John Jay since 2009.

Blogs as varied as bloggers themselves

 cmreview.org/blogs-as-varied-as-bloggers-themselves/

Lisa Lyon Payne

December 20, 2012

'You just never know what is going to grab interest'

By Pat Winters Lauro
Kean University

Drake University student Rachel Weeks was midway through spring semester when a blog post she wrote for a magazine writing course about turning a T-shirt into a tank top hit Internet gold – 60,000 hits.

"She posted a picture to Pinterest and it just exploded," said Jill Van Wyke, assistant professor at Drake's School of Journalism and Mass Communication in Des Moines. "It was eye-opening. You just never know what is going to grab interest."

Now that even the Pulitzer Prize has been bestowed on a blog — The Huffington Post for investigative journalism — it begs the question: what makes a good blog?

First, blogging is not journalism; it's a delivery system. Many blogs are promotional in nature or advocacy blogs, an important distinction for students. But within the profession, what makes a good journalistic blog depends on the type of blog it is, which can be as different as the sports page is from the op-ed page in a newspaper. Still, Weeks' post, the blog equivalent of a service feature, possessed common blog elements that resonated with its audience: it was concise, targeted a specific audience and it was interactive.

At Drake, blogging is infused throughout the journalism program is taught with different goals in mind, said Van Wycke. In the magazine class, students launch a blog on a specialized topic such as Weeks' blog, which was about how to live cheaply in Des Moines. In news courses, students do live blogging. In editing class, they follow editing blogs. The idea is that by the time they graduate, they are fully exposed to blogging and multimedia journalism. Blogs, she said, are particularly good at teaching students the importance of audience interactivity.

"Media isn't one way any more; it's not even two-way. It's many ways," Van Wycke said. "Students learn the importance of audience interaction, of readers talking to you and each other, of getting a good comments stream going. They need to be in that."



In fact, being part of a conversation is what blogs are all about, said Bart Brooks, who is an Associate Producer at NJ.com, the state's largest news website and works with bloggers. He said blogs that have gone viral all contain the same qualities: a great topic, a strong point of view and excellent timing. An example, he said, was a post on the NJ.com parenting page that commented on the suicide of Rutgers student Tyler Clementi, whose roommate used a webcam to spy on his gay encounter.

"It took a very sensitive, thoughtful approach to a difficult subject," said Brooks. "Because interest was so high in the Clementi story, and because the blog post was well written, it resonated with readers and took off."

Blogs have their own voice, and for students it often comes easier to them than news writing. Van Wycke said perhaps students view blogging as more forgiving and less formal than print.

"Some students can blog beautifully, but then can't do a 1,000 word story without a lot of drama and angst," said Van Wycke,

A blog has to offer value, whether that's accomplished through writing or reporting or both, said Rachele Kanigel, associate professor at San Francisco State University and author of "The Student Newspaper Survival Guide." Kanigel uses blogs in several different courses, but she especially liked one on a neighborhood beat called "Haighters Gon' Haight."

"His blog has a lot of voice, a lot of attitude," Kanigel explained. "He used first person; it was impressionistic and he did a lot of reporting — that's the ideal for me. He used the blog as a way to reflect on experiences, and add a personal note in an informal, conversational writing style that encourages commenting."

And authenticity counts for a lot. When Paul Isom, former director of student media at East Carolina University in North Carolina, worked at the *Birmingham News*, one of the best blogs he ever read was by a man who was a "good reporter and okay as a writer," but his football blog was passionate and cared about his audience.

"He was very conversational," Isom said. "He continued to talk with them in comments...and uniformly when he left, people lined up on his blog to tell him he was great and they would miss him."

But that's not what many news sites seem to do, and neither do their college journalism counterparts. Kanigel said she is doing research on college newspaper blogs and is surprised that most are using blogs mostly as a way to cover news between print editions.

"I was surprised they aren't using blogs in a more creative way," she said. "They are very much focused on the weekly deadline."

In 2008, 9.2 percent of college newspapers had newspaper blogs and 3.6 percent hosted reader blogs in a random sampling of 392 college publications, according to “College Newspapers and The Myth of Convergence” by Robert Bergland and David Hon presented at the Association of Educators of Mass Communication and Journalism Conference in 2009. The data is currently being updated.

In contrast, 45 percent of commercial daily newspapers had blogs, and 28 percent hosted reader blogs, according to a random sampling of 362 commercial daily papers in the U.S. in 2007, according to “Multimedia and Interactivity on Newspaper Websites: A Multi-Study Analysis of Six English-Speaking Countries,” by Robert Bergland, David Hon, Lisa Crawford and Sarah Noe published in *International Online Journalism Symposium Journal*.

In a discussion about best practices in blogging, media critic and longtime blogger Jay Rosen, a professor at New York University, said in a post that conversation builds in “spheres” on blogs.

“(Blogging) has to do with “spheres” of blogging, and being conversational within a sphere,” the post states. “Meaning: your blog has to be about something, a niche, topic, or slice of life. And there are other people blogging about that topic. You need to “map” that sphere, find those other sites, put standing links to them up at your site, monitor what they are saying, aggregate the best of it in a simple daily link post, like this one...”

For journalism students, a blog – especially under the guidance of an instructor – is a way to develop an online presence that all students need today. It also can help students land a job or an internship, said Betty Ming Liu, an adjunct professor in New York and former print reporter who after 16 years returned to daily journalism this year as an online reporter.

Liu tells students that her own personal blog has helped her land jobs. But beware. Blogging is a beast that needs to be fed, warns Liu, who blogs twice a week to keep the readers engaged.

“You want to train readers to look for you on the designated days,” she said.

It’s not only in journalism where blogging skills, paired with traditional reporting ability, are valued. Isom, who left East Carolina this year, said he is now blogging for a legal industry firm, where he applies his journalistic skills with Search Engine Optimization, a process that helps improve coveted search engine results. He picked up the skill at a Poynter Institute seminar and taught it to students at East Carolina, he said. But journalists don’t need advanced SEO knowledge, he said, although a fundamental knowledge of it can only help.

“I tied SEO to headline writing in media writing class,” he said. “I think it’s a great thing to know. It’s come in really handy.”

Blogs do have some rules. Of course, journalistic blogs are expected to follow the Society of Professional Journalists code of ethics. A lesser known custom is that blogs are supposed to share, said Bryan Murley, assistant professor of new and emerging media at Eastern Illinois University, who blogs about technology and college media for CMA.

“I’d say the most important rule is to show your work,” said Murley. “If you find information on another site, link to that site. Allow visitors to leave your site and explore the information that you’ve found.”

Murley said traditional news media have done a poor job of linking, and aren’t as good as bloggers at handling errors, although they are improving in that area.

Hence, a good blog uses traditional reporting and writing skills, but there is a lot more to it. A good blog is engaging, well-written and has a strong voice. It has value for the reader, perhaps through specialized knowledge. To be fair, it should link to all research – and of course, follow the journalistic code of ethics. And if a blogger wants to get attention, don’t forget SEO and posting to social networks, including curator-type platforms like Pinterest.

In short, blogs are not print. Says Murley: “It truly is different from writing a story for print, and it has its own conventions that build credibility on the web.”

Pat Winters Lauro is an assistant professor of journalism at Kean University, where she advises *The Tower* newspaper. She is a former staff writer with the *New York Daily News* and has been a regular contributor to the business section of *The New York Times*.

When Disaster Strikes a College Community

cmreview.org/when-disaster-strikes-a-college-community/

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Coping with disaster... Long Island University and Mercer County Community College.
Background photo Brian Birke, Creative Commons.

Surviving Sandy, other storms and a flood—and getting the college paper out

By Carolyn Schurr Levin

One of the most important, albeit seemingly routine, tasks of a college newspaper staff is the physical act of getting the newspaper out.

But what happens when a crisis hits, as it did when Hurricane Sandy hit the East Coast, only to be followed the following week by a nor'easter?

Among the college newspapers hit by Hurricane Sandy were the Pioneer, the weekly student newspaper at Long Island University Post in Brookville, N.Y., and the College Voice at Mercer County Community College in New Jersey. The College Voice publishes every three weeks.

In anticipation of the forecasted strong winds and hurricane conditions, Long Island University Post cancelled all classes on Monday, Oct. 29. Administrators encouraged students who could to evacuate the dormitories and return home. Approximately 600 students remained in the dorms during the storm.



The entire campus lost power shortly after the storm, as did the majority of Long Island. Cell phone coverage was spotty or nonexistent for more than a week. Communication basically stopped. The campus was without power, and the building housing the Pioneer's off-campus printer was without power—and half its roof.

Classes did not resume for 1 ½ weeks at LIU—until Nov. 7. While the Pioneer was forced to abandon its Halloween edition because of the storm, it published an online edition about a week after the hurricane hit. Among the ways Pioneer students made it happen:

- Those who had Internet access were able to submit stories. The news editor had no Internet access at all. So, she couldn't read or edit any stories. Editors who did have Internet access did that for her.
- Those who had cell phone access—cell phone service was sporadic for a week—were able to make telephone calls. Editors whose phones worked were able to get in touch with their reporters, and reporters whose phones worked were able to do interviews.
- A new reporter, who had just joined the newspaper staff during the fall semester, was one of the few with access to a computer. She wrote about the storm's effect on the campus.
- The paper's sports editor wrote about the effect of the storm on campus and other sports, including the cancellations of a Brooklyn Nets home opener and the New York City marathon.
- The editor-in-chief, who had lost part of her home and her car to the storm, and was without power, rented a car, drove to a local health club that had Wi-Fi, and began posting stories online.

Then, on Nov. 7, the day LIU Post was scheduled to reopen, a nor'easter hit Long Island and other parts of the East Coast.

The LIU Post campus lost power on and off on Nov. 7 and then completely on Nov. 8. Classes were cancelled yet again. The *Pioneer's* outside printing company lost power, for the second time in two weeks, on Nov. 7. For a second week in a row, the newspaper could not be published.

In the wake of the personal devastation experienced by so many residents of New York and New Jersey, including many students, faculty and staff of LIU Post, not publishing the college newspaper for a couple of weeks does not seem tragic. However, for journalism students with a sense of duty and commitment, losing two weeks out of a 15-week semester is quite a loss.

When normalcy finally returned, the *Pioneer* staff decided to add one more issue to the end of the semester to make up for the two lost print editions. They devoted many pages of the issue that was finally published on Nov. 14 to storm coverage.

College Voice students produce online edition after Hurricane Sandy

Hurricane Sandy presented similar challenges for the staff of the *College Voice* at Mercer County Community College in central New Jersey. The hurricane delayed regular publication of the Voice, which is published every three weeks.

Said journalism professor and adviser Holly Johnson: "We couldn't have put out a paper if we wanted to."

Like the *Pioneer* newsroom, much of the *Voice* newsroom was without power for a week or more. During the storm, the staff of the *Voice* did, however, try to use their social media sites as best as possible. The *Voice* published a Hurricane Sandy Special Edition on Nov. 14. The special edition, Johnson said, was cathartic for the staff.

"It let them report on what they were experiencing," she said. "It was a good learning experience. It brought them together."

School newspapers have experienced catastrophic events before Sandy, of course, and students have demonstrated similar grit and determination.

Student journalists publish in wake of Katrina, Alabama tornado, and Iowa flood

Hurricane Katrina, in late August 2005, led the staff of the *Hullabaloo* at Tulane University to create a "Tulane Hullabaloo Hurricane Plan." When Katrina hit, the Tulane students had just arrived at school for orientation. The university president called a town hall meeting and told everyone to evacuate in anticipation of Katrina.

The *Hullabaloo* staff dispersed around the country to other schools for the entire semester that Tulane remained closed after the storm. The newspaper staff would not be together again for approximately six months. But the *Hullabaloo* survived that semester.

The *Hullabaloo*'s Editor arrived at the University of Pennsylvania as her evacuation school. She told the staff of the *Daily Pennsylvanian* that she was the editor of a newspaper without a home. They generously gave her server space and hosted the *Hullabaloo* for the entire semester. The *Hullabaloo*'s staff continued to write and send in stories from all across the United States, and to publish their paper online.

Once staff members of the *Hullabaloo* returned to campus, they discovered they had lost everything in their newsroom to Katrina. New computers and other equipment were donated. The staff became experts at "the ask," according to Chantal Bailliet, Tulane's Director for Student Media.

If you are in need of anything as a result of such an unforeseen disaster, just ask, she said, adding. "You'd be surprised at how many people want to help out."

Following Hurricane Katrina, Bailliet created what she calls a "newspaper in a box." The *Hullabaloo* is ready to pack all necessary components to begin operating again, including its server, decide who is taking the box where, and resume operating remotely, if necessary. Their written hurricane plan is thorough. They are prepared.

It's not just hurricanes that warrant crisis planning. Other recent extreme weather conditions have challenged college newspapers to the same extent. An EF4 tornado ripped through Tuscaloosa, Ala., on April 27, 2011. The staff of the *Crimson White* at the University of Alabama survived the hurricane in the basement of their building.

"Within hours of the storm hitting, the staff was already at work updating their website with whatever information they could glean, given the chaos across town. Nothing came easy," recalled Mark Mayfield, associate director of the Office of Student Media. The campus was without power, so the staff went to Mayfield's house, which had survived the tornado, and to other locations, and used those places as their headquarters.

Within one week, the *Crimson White* had more than 100 stories online.

"Amazingly, they didn't have to be told to do that," Mayfield said. "In fact, in the end, we had to tell them to go home."

The *Crimson White* had already developed a strong "community engagement team" for their social media before the tornado. That team used Twitter to obtain and distribute basic information, such as where people needed food or water.

The *Crimson White*'s tornado experience forced them to become multimedia reporters.

"MSNBC, the New York Times, Dateline NBC, and other national media outlets link[ed] to stories in The *Crimson White*, or use[d] images from the newspaper's photographers. CBS News anchor Katie Couric even "tweeted" one of the CW articles. The newspaper also

produced a dozen or more videos as part of its coverage, including reports from affected areas of town,” Mayfield wrote in his account of the crisis.

The *Crimson White*’s tornado coverage earned the paper several awards and national recognition, and prompted job offers for staff members upon graduation. Emotionally, the tornado drew the staff together.

“They have a bond that will be forever,” Mayfield said.

In Ames, Iowa, in August 2010, a week before fall classes were starting, a flood affected operations of the student newspaper, the Iowa State Daily.

The city was divided into two halves. *Iowa State Daily* staff residing on the west side of the city could not get to the east side, and those living on the east side could not travel to the west. The solution staff members came up with: They split into two bureaus and worked from where they were living. As it turned out, staff photographers were residing on both sides.

The *Iowa State Daily* reported through the crisis, even though it was the week before school was scheduled to begin, which was the newspaper staff’s training week.

“It was probably one of the best training exercises we ever had,” recalled Mark Witherspoon, the student newspaper’s editorial adviser.

“What my students learned is that we publish no matter what. Our obligation is to get information to the community. It doesn’t matter what happens; we will publish. Not publishing is not an option,” Witherspoon said.

Lessons for college media in wake of natural disasters

What lessons can be learned from the unforeseen hurricane experiences of the *Pioneer* and the *Voice* during Hurricane Sandy this fall, as well as from the similar experiences of the *Hullabaloo*, *Crimson White* and *Iowa State Daily*?

- **First**, it is all important to have an accurate, updated staff list, with cell and home phone numbers and email addresses of all staff members. Hard copies of the list should be distributed at the beginning of each academic year so that contact can be made in the event of loss of power.
- **Second**, contingency plans should be made for publishing in the event of widespread power outages, especially on the campus. If publishing an online edition alone from an off campus location is feasible, a plan to do so should exist. The *Hullabaloo*’s “newspaper in a box” concept can ensure continuity during a crisis.

- **Third**, if possible, turn to your social media. The campus paper can be students' only way to learn about what is going on in their hyper-local area. If an issue of the actual paper is impossible, try to use Facebook or Twitter to keep students informed. Get a hash tag that people will recognize for all of your social media. Establish a strong "community engagement team," as the *Crimson White* had, to both develop and to disseminate news.
- **Fourth**, again, if at all possible during the crisis, take pictures and videos. Pictures will tell the story for students, parents, alumni and others. If conditions are safe, send staff photographers out. Ask readers to send in their pictures and videos on your social media sites.
- **Fifth**, turn the catastrophe into a learning experience. Focus on the storm. Report on what you are experiencing. In retrospect, the emergency will in all likelihood be the staff's most significant training experience during their college careers.
- **Sixth**, and most importantly, ensure everyone's safety. Everyone being safe and sound is more important than not missing an edition.

LINKS TO COLLEGE COVERAGE

Here is a link to **The VOICE** ([Since 1969](#)), at Mercer Community College.

Long Island University Post Pioneer shared a [link](#). How did the hurricane affect the sports world?

[Sandy's Effect on Sports \(liupostpioneer.com\)](#) David Otero Sports Editor In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, sports were the last thing people were concerned or worried about.

LIU Post Pioneer shared a [link](#). How did dormers experience the hurricane? Christina Foglietta spoke to students and shared her own experience.

[Did you feel Safe on Campus during the Hurricane? \(liupostpioneer.com\)](#) Many students had to stay on campus during Hurricane Sandy. There was no power at LIU Post from Sunday, October 28 to Saturday, November 3.



College Voice coverage
(<http://www.mcccvoice.org>)



Carolyn Schurr Levin is an attorney specializing in Media Law and the First Amendment. She has practiced law for over 20 years, including as the Vice President and General Counsel of Ziff Davis Media, the Vice President and General Counsel of Newsday, a Litigation Associate at Corbin Silverman and Sanseverino, and a Litigation Associate at Cravath, Swaine & Moore. She is admitted to the bars of New York, Connecticut and the District of Columbia. Levin also teaches Media Law and other related courses at the C.W. Post campus of Long Island University. Levin has also taught a graduate level course in Legal Aspects of Publishing at Pace University in New York City. As a freelance writer, Levin has been published in the New York Times Book Review, New York Law Journal, American Bar Association Journal, Corporate Counsel newsletter, Barrister magazine, and Special Counsel newsletter. Levin earned a J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School, a B.A. from Johns Hopkins University, and a Certificate in Journalism from New York University.

Research Spotlight: Black and White and Still Read All Over

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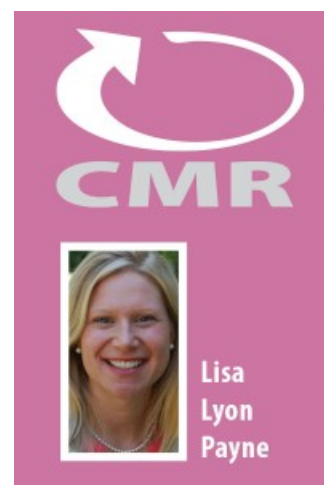
An Examination of the State of College Newspapers in a Turbulent Time

By Lisa Lyon Payne
Virginia Wesleyan College

Abstract: This paper provides an initial investigation of the current state of the college newspapers among liberal arts schools in the southeast. An online survey using both open and closed-ended questions examines variables such as method and frequency of publication, use of advertising and online presence. Only 37.5% of respondents reported having a journalism program at their institution, and those who contributed to the student newspaper came from majors ranging from biology to philosophy. While a full 100% of respondents reported having advertising in their college newspapers, about one-third of respondents reported they did not have an online edition of the paper. Most publications were fewer than 10 pages and did have a faculty adviser to the publication. Of the schools that participated, a majority said there is no class credit associated with their publications. Also of interest, just more than half of respondents stated staff writers receive some form of compensation for their contributions to the publication; where this compensation comes from varies.

Introduction

What do Twitter, the iPad and a campus newspaper have in common? Current literature suggests that all three are a preferred communication choice for many of today's college students (*The Washington Times*, March 8, 2012). Despite the slow and agonizing decline of traditional newspapers, research indicates that even in this modern, wireless world of communication, many college students gravitate toward the print version of their campus newspaper over an electronic version. Additionally, despite the woes of the traditional news daily, many student newspapers appear to be weathering the storm with fewer economic troubles (Keller 2008, Supiano 2012).



In addition to the documented decline of the traditional daily newspaper, enrollment in journalism programs has also suffered a decline. Percentages of students in journalism programs have dropped 6.6% since as recently as 2007 (Vlad, Becker, and Kazragis 2011, 300-301). This holds true despite an overall increase by 2% in all mass communication programs. Additionally, some scholars have suggested that daily print newspapers may cease to exist altogether within a decade (Zerba 2011, 597). While readership studies suggest that college students are averse to reading a daily print newspaper, their campus newspaper appears to be an exception. Some possible reasons for this phenomenon are the direct relevance of a college newspaper, the free price tag, and the notion that a college campus is one of the few remaining places with high pedestrian traffic and large amounts of leisure time (Jackson 2012).

If the newspaper industry and journalism in higher education are both experiencing turbulent times, but the college newspaper is “humming along,” (Keller 2008) this presents a critical need to examine the role of the college newspaper medium to better understand this interesting intersection of variables in a time of massive industry change.

This paper provides an initial investigation of the current state of the college newspaper among liberal arts schools in the Southeast. It specifically looks at variables like method and frequency of publication, use of advertising and online presence.

College newspapers and the Internet. There is no question that the Internet is dominating other older, less electronically-inclined media in many aspects. However, this trend is relatively recent for college newspapers. A little over one-third of college newspapers in the Editor and Publisher Yearbook did not even have a website in 2007 (Brockman, Bergland and Hon, 2011). Yet, an online presence is largely assumed for today’s major college media. The Internet can be used via cell phone, computer or music player. It has taken portability to an entirely new level. In the digital age, the so-called “dreamer generation” has made it increasingly difficult for older media to keep up (Zerba 2011, 597). Althuas and Tewksbury (2000) suggest that the Internet has actually become an inextricable part of the fabric of the lives of college students and their means for accessing information. An examination of the role of student newspapers is of critical importance now because today’s college students are the first true “Internet generation” (Diddi & Larosse 2006, 197).

The Internet is presently the dominant media and dominant source for news for many. It prescribes something few other media can offer, personalization. Internet news is constantly updated and just a click away, instant gratification to soothe the impatient, news-hungry soul. Though this may be true, few newspapers are published solely online. While a third of college newspapers exist only in print form, this means there’s a remaining two thirds who’ve made the transition to the Internet, maintaining both a print and an online edition.

A recent study of student news websites in the Pacemaker's Winners Circle found that WordPress is the most common content management system, replacing College Publisher, which is no longer offered for free (Brockman, Bergland and Hon 2011). WordPress and College Publisher are content management Internet hosts for college newspapers. College Publisher provides web hosting in exchange for revenue generated from selling ad space on the websites. College Publisher's staff is available to newsrooms 24 hours a day to answer all web issues for less than web design-savvy college journalists (Truong 2010). Colleges are now offering courses in new media and online journalism separately from regular journalism courses. Program coordinators are re-evaluating the line between journalism and web development (Parry 2011). College Publisher can cost as much as \$2,000 a year (Parry 2011). Domain names and running a website can be pricey for those who choose to create and design their own pages, so many of them are taking full advantage of advertising revenue.

According to Nick Summers of *Newsweek*, "premier college dailies" are now indistinguishable from real, professional papers. Some college papers are as long as 26 pages with full-color spreads. Putting out huge editions gets easier when advertisers unreservedly lust after your readers. The college demographic is as sweet as it gets: by definition young and educated, they're savvy, brand conscious and wield \$41 billion in discretionary spending power (Summers 2005).

College newspapers and advertising. Information on the how the downturn in advertising has affected college newspapers is not as grim as that for the newspaper industry on the whole. College newspapers enjoyed a 15% increase in advertising revenue in 2007, while print advertising revenue for commercial newspapers fell 9% (Keller 2008). This does not mean college newspapers are entirely unaffected, however. But the overall financial outlook for campus newspapers appears to be bucking the industry trend. Online advertising revenue is more difficult to grow, experts say, because the readership is more broad: alumni, parents, board members. This readership is less interesting to the local businesses who buy the bulk of print advertisements (Supiano 2012). Some suggest that as the trend toward online newspapers continues, the college newspapers will not be immune to this threat and may begin to suffer from advertising revenue loss as well.

College newspapers and change. With many variables surrounding the college newspaper industry in a state of flux, new strategies are emerging to maintain fiscal solvency. Oklahoma State University's *Daily O'Collegian* newspaper has decided to take a different route for generating revenue. In January 2011, the campus paper began charging a \$10/year access fee for readers outside a 25-mile radius of the college campus. The *O'Collegian* has a print circulation of 10,000, with 25% of its readership being affected by the new fees. The campus paper expects to reach professors, alumni, parents, and future students, many of whom are outside the 25-mile radius and would be required to pay for readership (Parry 2011).

The University of Georgia's *The Red & Black* has recently reduced its print frequency from five days a week out of financial need (Morales 2012). And the University of Virginia's *The Cavalier Daily* has announced it will no longer publish in print on Fridays. Both publications have announced an increase in emphasis on online news (Supiano 2012).

Need for study. As college budgets continue to tighten, college newspapers are increasingly seeking alternate ways to adjust to the needs of the climate (Matheny 2012). This unique intersection of industry variables creates a critical need to examine the current state of the college newspaper. Critics have lamented the dearth of scholarship addressing college newspapers (Brockman, Bergland and Hon 2011). This paper is an initial examination intended for descriptive purposes. It will provide a snapshot of the variables currently affecting college newspapers. Because of the exploratory nature of this study, the sample is limited and the responses include both quantitative and qualitative data. It is intended as an initial examination of how colleges run and maintain their college newspapers. Are they online? Are they completely student-run? What news do the publications cover? Which majors are writing for the newspaper? The research objectives for this study are as follows:

1. To determine the method(s), frequency and length of publication.
2. To determine what role the paper plays and its significance to the campus community.
3. To determine whether the paper plays any role off campus in the surrounding community.
4. To identify the paper's content and the news it includes and excludes.
5. To identify the extent to which the newspapers include advertising
6. To examine the role and scope of an online presence of the newspaper

Method

Sample: Because of the deliberate focus on premiere, liberal arts institutions in the southeast, Phi Beta Kappa's website, www.pbk.org, was used to determine the sample for this study. From that point, the researchers visited each institution's website for the email of the editor-in-chief for each campus publication. There are 280 PBK chapters, which PBK divides into seven districts: New England, Middle Atlantic, East Central, North Central, South Atlantic, South Central and Western. This study surveyed only Phi Beta Kappa schools from the South Atlantic district.

This district is composed of 51 PBK schools. The survey was sent to 51 schools, and three of them were returned via failure to deliver notifications. Sixteen institutions responded, yielding a 33% response rate. This response rate may be attributed to the fact that the survey was sent out late into the spring semester, while students are busy with exams and finishing various assignments.

Questionnaire: The survey was sent out via email, Monday, May 2, 2011 to the editors in-chief of Phi Beta Kappa institutions in the South Atlantic Region. The email included a brief explanation of the study and a link to the survey, formatted by and hosted at SurveyMonkey.com. A reminder email was sent out Wednesday, May 4, 2011. In the initial email, sample members were notified that the survey would only be available for completion through the night of Friday, May 6, 2011. The survey was closed at midnight.

The survey was available for completion for five days. In those five days, 16 responses were collected, equaling a third of those sampled. Those who responded became eligible to win a \$50 Visa gift card, to be mailed to the winner. The winner was randomly selected and notified Monday, May 9, 2011. SurveyMonkey.com was used for constructing, administering and collecting data for the questionnaire issued via email.

The questionnaire was composed of 25 questions in a variety of formats. Questions formats included multiple choice, short answer, semantic differential and Likert scale. The questions were assembled in three parts.

The first part was designed to gather demographic data on the institution being surveyed. Whether the school is public or private, campus population and the percentage of residential students were among the questions asked. Respondents were also asked to check which programs of study the school offers, including Journalism, English, Business, Creative Writing, Education, New Media and others.

The second part addressed the school's newspaper. This included questions about frequency of publication, length of the publication, presence of advertising, number of advertisements per issue, level of adviser involvement, extent of non-campus news coverage, whether students outside of journalism contribute to the paper, the sections included in the newspaper, whether newspaper staff is paid and presence of an online edition.

The final section specifically addressed online publications. Questions addressed how often the online content is updated, whether archived material was available online, who updates the online content and whether a web hosting site is used. Data were collected and processed initially by SurveyMonkey.com. and were further analyzed using Microsoft Excel.

Results

Campus Demographics. Of the sixteen participants, 56.2% were members of public institutions. Campus populations were divided with 43.8% less than 2,500 students and 43.8% with student populations of 10,000 or more.

A second key demographic was the percentage of residents who presumably have easier, quicker access to campus publications in their print format versus commuters. Only 6.3% said their campus populations were 0- 20% residential, with 12.5% claiming 20-40% was

residential; 31.3% claimed 40-60% was residential, 12.5% claimed 60-80% was residential and 37.5% claimed residents made up 80-100% of the student population.

The last question of this section asked participants about the academic programs offered at their institution. A list of programs was given, and respondents were asked to check all that were offered. It was made clear to participants that while some programs encompass others, (e.g. a communications department may include media studies and/or journalism), they were only to check those specifically offered at their college. This question examined how many schools offer journalism and like fields as a background for questions later in the survey regarding newsroom makeup. It was found that only 37.5% of institutions surveyed offer a Journalism program. Other results include the following

- 68.8% offer Communications or Media Studies
- 50% of the institutions offer Public Relations
- 31.3% offer Professional Writing
- 18.8% offer New Media.

The most popular programs of study were English at 100%, Art at 93.8%, and Computer Science or Programming at 87.5%.

Campus newspapers. The second part of the questionnaire examined the institutions' publications. The first questions asked about the frequency of print publication. The responses were almost evenly divided, with 26.7% responding daily, 26.7% weekly and 26.7% bi-weekly. Only 13.2% responded yes to a monthly publication. An "other" category was given as an option, under which one participant responded stating their newspaper was published in print twice weekly and online daily.

Respondents were asked about the length of their publications; 53.8% responded their papers were fewer than 10 pages, and 33.3% said 10-15 pages, while 12% reported publications longer than 15 pages.

Respondents were asked about the frequency of advertisements in their print publications. One hundred percent of participants responded "yes" to using advertising. Additionally, participants were asked to estimate the number of ads per edition. Forty percent responded there were 5-10 ads in every print edition, while 33.3% claimed to have fewer than five. Only 13.3% claimed to have more than 20 ads per print edition.

Figure 1 is a table titled "Table 1: Frequency of Publication by Type of Institution". It shows the percentage of institutions that publish a newspaper at different frequencies, categorized by institution type. The data is as follows:

Institution Type	Daily	Weekly	Bi-weekly	Monthly	Other
All Institutions	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
Public	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
Private	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
For-profit	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
Non-profit	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
Religious	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
Other	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%

Figure 1

Figure 2 is a table titled "Table 1: Frequency of Publication by Type of Institution". It shows the percentage of institutions that publish a newspaper at different frequencies, categorized by institution type. The data is as follows:

Institution Type	Daily	Weekly	Bi-weekly	Monthly	Other
All Institutions	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
Public	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
Private	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
For-profit	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
Non-profit	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
Religious	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
Other	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%

Figure 2

Figure 3 is a table titled "Table 1: Frequency of Publication by Type of Institution". It shows the percentage of institutions that publish a newspaper at different frequencies, categorized by institution type. The data is as follows:

Institution Type	Daily	Weekly	Bi-weekly	Monthly	Other
All Institutions	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
Public	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
Private	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
For-profit	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
Non-profit	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
Religious	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%
Other	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	13.2%	5.7%

Figure 3

The next section of this survey had several short answer questions. The first asked participants about faculty involvement: is there an adviser to their publication, and does that person have trained journalism experience? The majority (62.5%) of respondents said their student newspaper does have a faculty adviser. Of these responses, six said their advisers are trained in journalism, having worked for major papers. The remaining four responded that the advisor's role was limited or merely there for the business aspect. One participant said, "We are an independent company that does not employ university personnel. We have a faculty liaison adviser that attends business meetings, but has no editorial significance."

Respondents were asked an open-ended question to assess to what extent non-campus news was included in the school newspaper. The majority of publications only covered national news when it could be reported from an angle that applied to students. For example, one respondent said, "Non-campus news is only included if it can be localized." Another wrote, "Non-campus news is included if there's a campus response that deserves coverage, like fundraising for the Haiti earthquake." One respondent noted including a new Global section in the newspaper. They wrote, "It appears in every issue, and highlights Goucher's study abroad requirements as well as includes international news articles," One participant answered saying their publication was the only one in town, so their news extended beyond the campus and to local members of the community and would include anything that could affect the town. Another respondent said they are the paper of record for the county.

Question 10 was an open response question. It asked participants if many students from majors outside journalism participate in the student newspaper? If so, which majors contribute? Only one respondent said their staff was comprised only of journalism majors. In fact, five replied that their institution did not have a journalism major, so all of the contributors were non- journalism majors. Ten respondents indicated they draw from a broad range of student majors for their newspaper staff. Some of the specific majors listed were English, Philosophy, Economics, Political Science, Biology, Computer Science, American Studies and International Affairs.

Participants were asked to select from a list all sections covered by their publication. Most common sections reported are news, arts and entertainment, opinions, sports, letters to the editor and features. Least common sections are business, off-campus news, national news and weather.

It was found that 81.25% of respondents' institutions do not offer a course coinciding with participation in the student paper. Furthermore, 50% of participants' institutions pay at least a portion of their news teams.

Online Editions. The final section of the survey asked questions about online editions of the newspaper. Eleven of the 16 participants have online editions of their papers and were eligible to fill out this section of the questionnaire. Put another way, 31% of respondents did not have an online edition of their newspaper.

When asked how often newsrooms updated their online content, 45.5% said they updated it daily. The remaining 54.5% percent was split evenly between updating their content every few hours, weekly, and only as the print edition came out. Furthermore, 100% of participants reported that archives were available online.

Related Table

Survey Results by Type of Institution

Type of Institution	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents	Number of Publications	Percentage of Publications
Liberal Arts College	10	100%	10	100%
Comprehensive College	10	100%	10	100%
Research University	10	100%	10	100%
Private College	10	100%	10	100%

CMR

Figure 4

Respondents were also asked who manages the online content. This was asked as an open-ended response, to which respondents gave a variety of answers. The most popular response was editors were responsible for updating content in coordination with an online editor. Other responses included a multimedia editor, a technology manager and the editor in chief.

When asked if the newspaper uses a web-hosting site like College Publisher for its online publication, respondents provided open-ended answers indicating the majority use either WordPress or College Publisher. One respondent reported using Gryphon/Detroit Softworks, and one uses a private server.

Discussion

This study offers a glimpse of a unique subset of college media. The liberal arts institution seeks to impart broad general knowledge to its students, while student newspapers offer the ability to use that broad knowledge base in a professional or journalistic capacity. Likewise, only 37.5% of respondents in this study reported having a journalism program at their institution, and those who contributed to the student newspaper came from majors ranging from biology to philosophy. This broad range of academic backgrounds suggests a richness in the perspectives of these student publications. The content of the newspapers also varied, with some publications serving as the sole news source for the community outside the campus, while others only included news specifically relating to the campus community.

In other ways, the student newspapers from this study resemble the more traditional college publication model. A full 100% of respondents reported having advertising in their college newspapers, reinforcing the need for the bread and butter of the publication. The majority said they run five to 10 ads every edition. College-aged students represent a large portion of discretionary spending lusted for by advertisers. This is no less true today and in the environment of the liberal arts institution.

A mixed picture of the use of technology emerged with almost one-third of respondents reporting they did not have an online edition of the paper. Of those who do offer an online version, more than half of respondents do not report to update the content daily. It appears that in this particular environment, little has changed since a half-decade ago when Bergland, Hon, Noe and Hartigan (2008) reported a little more than a third of college newspapers did not have an online presence. Today's Internet generation appears to be cleaving to the traditional print form of the student newspaper. This may be true, in part,

because of the difficulty student newspapers have experienced in developing a strong advertising base for the online version of the publication. With the broader readership of the online newspaper comes the difficulty in convincing advertisers to invest in the medium.

Most publications were fewer than 10 pages and did have a faculty adviser to the publication. Of the schools that participated, a majority said there is no class credit associated with their publications. Also of interest, just more than half of respondents stated staff writers receive some form of compensation for their contributions to the publication; where this compensation comes from varies.

Limitations

Since the sample for this study was small, inferential tests of broader significance based on the responses here cannot be generalized to other populations. Although the data reported here apply only to the liberal arts institutions in this study, the results are of conceptual significance. Little current research exists on the issues studied here, and it is important to use these findings as a starting point for a conversation about the state of college newspapers in the midst of such a rapidly transforming environment. By starting with studies such as this, we can better understand the field of student newspapers in the midst of a sea of change within the newspaper industry.

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Lisa Lyon Payne is an assistant professor of communication at Virginia Wesleyan College in Norfolk, Virginia. She is also the faculty adviser of the VWC student newspaper, The Marlin Chronicle. Lyon Payne obtained her doctorate from the University of Georgia's Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication in 1999. She has a master's degree in communication from the University of Tennessee and a bachelor's degree from The College of William and Mary. She has also taught as an assistant professor of communication at Kennesaw State University in Georgia and has published works on crisis communication, reputation management and public relations theory development. In addition to her academic experiences, Lyon Payne has worked as a public relations consultant, research analyst, editorial assistant and writer. Outside of her academic endeavors, she enjoys tennis, the beach and time with her husband and two sons.

Editor's Note: CMR seeking your feedback...

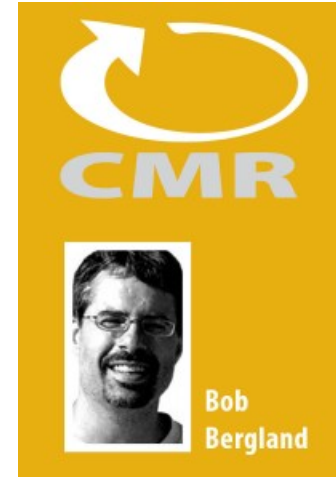
 cmreview.org/editors-note-cmr-seeking-your-feedback/

College Media Review

December 20, 2012

How can the journal better serve you and take advantage of the online format?

In my previous, inaugural column, I asked y'all for payback—that is, to give back to the journal for all the ways it has helped you out by contributing to the journal. The response so far has been wonderful. Thanks to your efforts and some good corralling by Managing Editor Debra Landis, we've gotten numerous good submissions, with six good articles, a book review and a research article in this issue, with more to come in January. Keep them coming!



Instead of payback, this time I'm asking for feedback. You see, this is the ideal occasion to rethink the journal, to re-evaluate what the journal could or should be providing to the CMA membership. With the change in editor and managing editor, and the switch last year to an online-only format, now is the perfect time to question what *College Media Review* is doing and what we could be doing differently or better. What sorts of things would you like to see in the journal? What recommendations do you have to take advantage of the online format of the journal? Ideas to help better incorporate social media into the journal? Ways the journal might be more tied to the conventions and other CMA activities?

At the same time, it's important to also let us know what the journal doing well that you want to make sure doesn't change. In the end, there may be consensus that there is little that needs changing. Regardless, we'd like to begin a conversation to explore directions the journal might go in the coming years.

I encourage you to either respond with comments after this article, or to email me privately: bergland@missouriwestern.edu. I look forward to hearing from you and sharing your thoughts and ideas with Debra, Webmaster Bill Neville and Associate Editor Lillian Lodge Kopenhaver.