

Bylaws of the Community Journalism Interest Group of AEJMC

Constitution: The Community Journalism Interest Group of AEJMC is a group of teachers, scholars, professionals, and students who are dedicated to the advancement of journalists working in smaller newsrooms where the challenges and opportunities often are far different than in larger communities. Although the traditions of community journalism are rooted in rural newspapers, the Community Journalism Interest Group includes members whose interests include all known and emerging communication media and many diverse definitions of “community.” The purpose of the Community Journalism Interest Group is to promote and enhance the teaching of community journalism; support and critique research related to community journalism; and to nurture and expand the discipline of community journalism education and scholarship.

Article 1: Membership

Section 1. Classification of membership: Regular members shall be facultymembers of institutions engaged in journalism education at the college undergraduate or graduate level, or persons in related professional activities who have an interest in community journalism teaching and/or research. A regular member is one whose interest group dues are paid in advance of the annual meeting.

Section 2. Funds of the Division shall be deposited with the AEJMC Treasurer (Article 2, Section 7, AEJMC Bylaws), who will provide the facilities of his or her offices for their accounting. Other funds will be deposited in appropriate separate accounts by the AEJMC treasurer.

Section 3. Only regular members are entitled to voting rights.

Section 4. Membership in COMJIG does not carry with it membership in AEJMC (Article 2, Section 3, AEJMC Bylaws).

Section 5. COMJIG dues are proposed by the executive committee and are to be approved by members attending the annual business meeting.

Article 2: Meetings

Section 1. The annual meeting of COMJIG shall be held concurrently with that of AEJMC (Article 5, Section 7, AEJMC Bylaws). The meeting shall be held on any evening of the convention in the convention hotel or at a nearby site selected by the head.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called and held in connection with any plan or activity designed to carry out the stated functions of COMJIG, upon concurrence of a quorum of the Executive Committee.

Section 3. Decisions of COMJIG and of its Executive Committee shall be by majority vote of members present and voting.

Section 4. Robert's Rules of Order shall be the manual for parliamentary procedure in meetings of COMJIG.

Section 5. Each regular member shall be entitled to one vote in elections, and to one vote on all issues or proposals presented at an annual or special meeting or special meeting of COMJIG.

Section 6. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once annually during the annual AEJMC Convention and at such other times as its membership shall determine. For purposes of conducting business, the head may present propositions to the Executive Committee and poll its

membership by postal, electronic mail, fax, or telephone. Meetings held via telephone conference call or other interactive means shall be deemed official meetings. Such balloting shall constitute performance of the advisory function of the Executive Committee between annual meetings.

Section 7. Members of the Executive Committee may consider amendments to the COMJIG bylaws during official meetings. Proposed amendments must first receive approval of the Executive Committee. These bylaws may then be amended by a two-thirds vote of the membership present and voting at any annual meeting, provided that sufficient notice of the proposed amendment be submitted via email in advance of the meeting.

Article 3: Nominations and Elections

Section 1. The current vice head/program chair, who is the incoming head of COMJIG, shall, with consultation of a two-member nominating committee, present a list of nominees to the head of COMJIG no later than 90 days prior to the annual meeting. One member of the committee shall be elected at the previous annual meeting and one shall be appointed by the head.

Section 2. It shall be the duty of the nominating committee to invite nominations and develop a slate of nominees from COMJIG's regular membership prior to the annual meeting, to present the slate at that meeting, inviting further nominations from the floor, and then to conduct the election of the officers and Executive Committee members. Upon completion of the election, the nominating committee chair shall inform members of the names of the winning candidates.

Section 3. Elections shall be held at the annual meeting. Only members of COMJIG shall be entitled to vote in the election. Special elections may be held by postal mail or electronic mail. In the event such elections are necessary, the secretary shall obtain from the AEJMC membership director a list of all current members of COMJIG, and assure that ballots are mailed or emailed to each such member.

Section 4. A candidate for office shall be deemed elected if he or she receives more votes than those cast for any other contender for the office.

Section 5. Upon successful completion of an elected term of office as vice head/program chair, the holder of that office shall automatically succeed to, and possess all the rights and responsibilities of, the COMJIG head. His or her term as head will begin the day immediately following the election of a new vice head.

Section 6. No member of the nominating committee may become a candidate for vice head/program chair or for the Executive Committee. If a person on the nominating committee is interested in running for office, he or she shall withdraw from the committee, and the head shall appoint a replacement.

Article 4: Terms and Duties of Officers

Section 1. The head and vice head/program chair of COMJIG shall serve from the day after the election at the annual meeting through the day of the election at the next annual meeting. They shall not be eligible to succeed themselves in office, although they may be reelected to the office after a period of one year, and may serve in other COMJIG offices. They shall be responsible for planning and carrying out a program designed to accomplish the purposes of COMJIG.

Section 2. The secretary, research chair, teaching standards chair, and PF&R chair shall serve from the day after the election at the annual meeting through the day of the election at the next annual meeting. They shall be eligible to succeed themselves in office. Appointed officers shall serve from the date of their appointment until the next annual meeting. They may be immediately re-appointed.

Section 3. The head of COMJIG shall be the Executive Officer of COMJIG and shall administer its affairs and funding, with the advice of the Executive Committee, including the appointment of any necessary committees. The head shall preside at all meetings of COMJIG and the Executive Committee, when present. He or she shall also preserve order, enforce the Constitution and Bylaws, and perform all duties of a presiding officer. The COMJIG head must prepare the annual report to be mailed to AEJMC headquarters on June 15 of the year of his or her term. After his or her term of office expires, the outgoing head must update that report immediately after the end of AEJMC's fiscal year, September 30. The COMJIG head shall be a member of the Advisory Board of AEJMC (Article 3, Section 3, AEJMC Constitution).

Section 4. It shall be the duty of the vice head/program chair to carry out whatever tasks may be assigned to him or her by the head for the purpose of accomplishing the stated objectives of COMJIG. In the event of a vacancy in the office of head, for any reason, the vice head/program chair shall assume the title and duties of that office until a new head is chosen at the next regular election. The vice head/program chair shall preside in the absence of the head, at meetings of COMJIG and/or the Executive Committee. In the event the vice head/program chair is unable to complete the term of that office, or succeeds to the position of head during an unexpired term, the secretary/newsletter editor shall assume the title and duties of vice head/program chair until the next regular election. The head will then name a new secretary/newsletter editor with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee. In the event both the head and vice head/program chair are unable to complete their terms, any member of the Executive Committee may convene a meeting of that body and elect COMJIG members to serve as head and vice head/program chair until the next annual meeting.

Section 5. The secretary shall take and keep the minutes of the COMJIG annual meeting, all Executive Committee meetings and any other COMJIG records. Minutes shall be posted on the COMJIG blog. This officer will be responsible for the publication of communications to COMJIG members (such as a newsletter) and perform any other duties requested by the COMJIG head in accordance with the stated objectives of COMJIG. The secretary also will serve as chair of the membership committee, and will appoint and direct a committee in accordance with AEJMC bylaws (Article II, Sec. 1) to promote membership in the COMJIG by individuals and/or organizations involved with educational or professional community journalism. Eligible individuals and organizations are those concerned principally with teaching, research, or public service in community journalism and those concerned principally with practicing in the various fields of community journalism.

Section 6. The research committee chair, in accordance with AEJMC bylaws, seeks to enhance the scholarly activities of community journalism, confer academic honors on behalf of AEJMC for meritorious scholarly achievements in community journalism at the annual convention and confer with other associations and organizations concerned with communications research (Article VII, Sec. 5). The duties include the promotion and administration of all COMJIG research activities, including those to be held at the annual convention. It shall be the duty of the research committee chair to work in conjunction with the head and vice head/program chair for the purpose of accomplishing program objectives for the annual convention. This officer will submit an annual report of all research activities to the secretary/newsletter editor and to the COMJIG head for his or her annual report.

Section 7. The teaching standards committee chair will appoint and direct a committee in accordance with AEJMC bylaws that is concerned with: standards of academic and professional preparation for teachers in the field; appointment, tenure, promotion, compensation, research, and retirement issues; minimum standards for instruction and research; faculty administration relationships; and matters of accreditation (Article VII, Sec. 3). This officer will submit an annual report of all teaching standard activities to the secretary/newsletter editor and to the head for his or her annual report.

Section 8. The PF&R committee chair in accordance with AEJMC bylaws is concerned with freedom of expression, legally and intellectually ethical issues among media educators and practitioners, media criticism and accountability, minority affairs, and liaison between educators and professionals (Article VII, Sec. 4). However, this provision is not deemed to preclude the COMJIG head, in accordance with Article 3, Section 6 of this Constitution, to appoint a separate liaison officer between COMJIG and a professional organization.

Section 9. All officers delineated in Sections 1 through 9 represent the Executive Committee for the COMJIG and shall make brief reports on their activities for presentation at the annual meeting.

Section 10. In the event any of the committee chairs (research, teaching standards, PF&R, membership/may nd to change this to reflect changes re: membership chair./) resigns or is unable to fulfill the functions of the office, the Executive Committee shall fill the vacancy until the next annual meeting at which time a COMJIG member shall be elected to serve in that office.

Section 11. A quorum at a meeting at which all members of the Executive Committee have been invited to attend in person or by electronic means shall be four. For the purposes of conducting COMJIG's business, the head may present propositions to the Executive Committee and poll all its members by postal, electronic mail, fax, or by telephone. Such balloting shall constitute performance of the advisory function of the Executive Committee between annual meetings.

Section 12. Executive Committee members are expected to attend the Association's annual convention. Barring a reasonable scheduling conflict, a personal emergency, or a clearly explained hardship, any member of the Executive Committee who does not attend the Association's annual convention may be removed from office upon a recommendation by the COMJIG head and a majority vote of the members attending the annual meeting. Once a position is declared vacant, the members shall elect another COMJIG member to fill that unexpired term.

Section 13. The treasurer of COMJIG shall be the Treasurer of AEJMC (Article 5, Section 6, AEJMC Bylaws). Responsibility for non-routine expenditure of funds shall rest with the COMJIG head, with approval from the vice head and a majority of members of the executive committee. Routine expenditures of funds shall include but not be limited to mailing labels for the mailings to members, food and facilities for the annual meeting, and co-sponsorship of other divisions' mid-year conferences. Non-routine expenditures of funds shall include but not be limited to travel on COMJIG business, particularly but not limited to travel involving the COMJIG's liaisons with professional organizations. The head, in consultation with the vice head and the executive committee, also may authorize limited expenses for non-AEJMC-member convention speakers in accordance with AEJMC's convention expenses policy. If a question arises as to the propriety of a proposed expenditure, it shall be submitted to AEJMC's Executive Director or Executive Committee for resolution.

This constitution and these bylaws were adopted and placed into force on May 31, 2007.

Signed:

Peggy Kuhr, head / founding vice head, 2006-07
Bill Reader, vice head / programming chair, 2006-07
Eileen Gilligan, secretary, 2006-07
Jack Rosenberry, research chair, 2006-07
Elizabeth Hansen, teaching standards chair, 2006-07
Al Cross, professional freedom & responsibility chair, 2006-07.
Jock Lauterer, immediate past head / founding head (2004-06)