



SYMPOSIUM INTRODUCTION: iPads and Tablets in the JMC Curriculum

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Last year when I proposed SPIG run a bootcamp at the annual conference to address how we're using iPads and tablets in the classroom, I wasn't sure there would be more than five people sitting around a hotel meeting room in Chicago. But more than 20 people came, and alongside generous and stimulating presentations by Kenneth Pybus (Abilene Christian) and Ralph E. Hanson (University of Nebraska at Kearney), attendees exchanged tips and questions, proving that the conversation on tablets in the journalism and mass communication curriculum was just beginning.

What are the possibilities for using tablets on assignments? What are the limitations? Do we give up teaching students about the appropriate use of cameras if we have them shooting with tablets and smartphones? Is the expense worth it? And should we privilege iPad over other tablet choices out there?

As a way to keep the discussion going, TJMC asked three people with iPad experiments to reflect on the journey. Our contributors—Marcus Messner, who received a Knight News Challenge Bridge Grant to introduce an iPad reporting project at Virginia Commonwealth University; Maureen Boyle, who used iPads in a reporting class at Stonehill College; and Cathy Yungmann, who uses iPhones and iPads in her teaching at Cabrini College—have a lot of insight to offer. But we decided to truly make this a conversation by hosting an online discussion on the issues raised by the essays.

On Jan. 25, SPIG Member Mary Alice Basconi, of East Tennessee State University, will moderate a discussion on iPads in the Journalism and Mass Communication curriculum right on the SPIG listserv. The authors of the essays in our symposium will also be available to respond to questions directed toward them. Look for Mary Alice's opening remarks Friday morning as she launches the thread with the subject "Tablet journalism." If you are not subscribed to the SPIG listserv, do so soon by sending an email to spig@simpson.edu. Keep the subject line blank and turn off any automatic signature line you use in your email. Simply write "subscribe." Our goal in 2013 is to better link TJMC to our everyday pedagogical discussions. The lively SPIG listserv might be a place to start.

Please see these related supporting essays:

- Reporting with the iPadJournos: Educating the Next Generation of Mobile and Social Media Journalists by Marcus Messner
- When iPad Meets J101: Can Video and Basic Newswriting Co-exist in the Classroom? by Maureen E. Boyle
- Using iPads and iPhones in Communication Classes by Cathy Yungmann