



NEWSLETTER GUIDE

Welcome from BAMJ Head <i>Heidi Makady, Texas State</i>	2
#AEJMC26 Panel Lineup <i>Kris Vera-Phillips, Southern Methodist</i>	3
Mentorship Survey Open <i>Elia Powers, Towson</i>	4
Research Update <i>Stan Jastrzebski, Missouri</i>	5
Electronic News Update <i>Debora Wenger, Mississippi (editor-in-chief)</i>	7

WELCOME FROM BAMJ HEAD

Heidi Makady, Texas State

Every year, the Bliss and Hood-Dupont (previously Burkum) awards remind us why BAMJ matters. This year, we're thrilled to celebrate **Michael Bruce**, this year's recipient of the Hood-Dupont Service Award, after we renamed it last year to honor Lee Hood and Nancy Dupont's expanded legacy of service to our field. We're also thrilled to celebrate **Debora Wenger**, this year's recipient of the Edward L. Bliss Award for Distinguished Broadcast Journalism Education. Both awards represent our community, and we're grateful for their exceptional service and contributions to our field.

BAMJ has always been a community first. From the beginning, I believed that strengthening the research culture of our division would reflect just how much talent lives in this community. This year, I'm proud of what that commitment produced and for this vision to find its footing.

Our BAMJ membership grew by 16%, and research submissions surged 37.5% from 2024, sustaining the significant momentum the division has built. Most significantly, our flagship journal *Electronic News* now carries an impact factor of 1.7.

This year, we also debut a **Best In-Person Poster Presentation Award**, as we honor the recipient during the conference. I encourage everyone to engage with our poster session and recognize the excellent work on display from our presenters. What this division has built in scholarship, mentorship, and community over the years is something special!

As you'll read, our conference panels and research lineup is a testament to the growing engagement and scholarly output of our members. Our sessions address AI's growing role in broadcast journalism, shifting media policy, press freedom, storyteller well-being, and representation in the newsroom, bringing together scholars and practitioners for timely and much awaited conversations.

We look forward to recognizing our top paper winners, as well as the inaugural recipient of BAMJ's Best In-Person Poster Presentation. We want to thank our amazing reviewers whose dedication keeps our scholarship strong. Special thanks to our top reviewer this year, **Lindsey Maxwell Conlin**, for her dedication and effort!

Finally, I hope you can join us for our **BAMJ social on August 7**, as we celebrate Debora and Michael for their awards! We'll be at Brennan's (417 Royal Street) from 7:45 to 9:30 p.m.

See you in NOLA!

#AEJMC26 PANEL LINEUP*Kris Vera-Phillips, Southern Methodist***#AEJMC26: BAMJ's 2026 Panels Tackle Broadcast Journalism's Biggest Pressure Points**

The first day of school is just around the corner, and many scholars and educators are trying to figure out how to present the changing media landscape in their classrooms. From navigating AI tools to federal regulators reshaping the media industry, the field of journalism and mass communication continues to be a compelling site for research and practice. At this year's conference, BAMJ presents five panels examining the different forces redefining the media in the United States:

Wednesday, August 5

8:30 to 9:45 a.m.

The week opens with **"The State of Weather Media Studies and Why It Matters,"** a research panel moderated by Susan Keith [Rutgers] with Marcus Funk [Sam Houston State], Dylan McLemore [Oklahoma State], Christoph Mergerson [Maryland], and Sohana Nasrin [Tampa]. The panel makes the case that weathercasters are underappreciated science communicators, pushing back on sensationalism and conspiracy theories about weather and climate in ways that shape viewers' political knowledge—hardly the "soft news" reputation the beat carries. The location adds weight: New Orleans knows better than most cities what's at stake when trusted weather information reaches, or fails to reach, the public. The panel will propose a definition and research agenda for a field its organizers argue has been studied far too little.

Thursday, August 6

9:45 to 11 a.m.

"Caring for the Storyteller: Balancing Ambition, Identity, and Self-Care in Classrooms and Newsrooms" is co-sponsored with the Commission on LGBTQIA+ Communities. Moderated by our own Kristina Vera-Phillips [Southern Methodist], the panel brings together Ryan Vasquez [WRKF/WWNO], Kalisha Whitman [Journalism Educator], Stephen Jiwanmall [Georgia], and Charisse Gibson [WWL-TV New Orleans] to discuss burnout, boundaries, and support networks for early-career journalists, particularly those from BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and other underrepresented communities who carry the added labor of navigating identity in the newsroom. The panel's throughline: professional excellence and self-preservation aren't competing goals.

11:30 a.m.–12:45 p.m.

"Training Tomorrow's Journalists: AI Literacy, Accountability, and Ethical Practices in Broadcast Curricula" is co-sponsored with the Media Ethics Division. Moderator Laura Smith [Penn State] leads Heidi Makady [Texas] and Kelly Kaufhold [Texas], Stan Jastrebzski [Missouri], and Lee Zurik [Gray Media]

in examining how newsrooms and classrooms alike are adapting to tools like RunwayML, Adobe Premiere Beta, and Google Gemini. As news directors increasingly expect graduates to arrive "AI-ready," the panel will dig into student perceptions of these tools and the harder questions of content labeling and editorial accountability.

Friday, August 7

9:45 to 11 a.m.

"Broadcasting in the Public Interest: Examining FCC Leadership Shifts and Policy Upheaval" is co-sponsored with the Community Journalism Interest Group. Bill Davie (Louisiana-Lafayette) moderates Laurie Thomas Lee (Nebraska), Carey Higgins-Dobney (Kentucky), Denetra Walker (Georgia), and Joe Chautin (Louisiana Association of Broadcasters). Since Brendan Carr became chair of the FCC, U.S. broadcasting has experienced sweeping regulatory and ownership changes, including mergers involving Paramount Global and Skydance Media, congressional defunding of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, investigations into NPR and PBS, and renewed scrutiny of broadcast ownership limits. This panel will explore creative solutions local communities are undertaking to fill unmet information needs by re-envisioning the role of public, community spaces in view of budget cuts and regulatory changes affecting broadcast rights.

Saturday, August 8

9:30 to 10:45 a.m.

"Disrespected and Derailed: Women of Color Journalists Covering the Trump Administration" is presented by the Commission on the Status of Women and co-sponsored by BAMJ. J. Israel Balderas (Elon) moderates Sherri Williams (American University) and Whitney Harris Christopher (American University) and Dorothy Bland (North Texas) in an examination of the gendered and racialized hostility women of color journalists face while covering the administration—grounded in scholarship on misogyny, heteropatriarchy, and newsroom culture.

MENTORSHIP SURVEY OPEN***Elia Powers, Towson***

Our division would like to gauge interest in initiatives that would help members find (and connect) research collaborators and mentors/mentees.

Please take [this survey](#) to share your feedback!

RESEARCH UPDATE

Stan Jastrzebski, Missouri

It's been another strong year for BAMJ submissions! The decision to allow both full papers and research-in-progress submissions yielded **55 entries** (32 full papers and 23 RiP), nearly matching last year's record of 59. This left a sizable workload for reviewers, but they came through, with **33 scholars** offering feedback on submissions.

The decision was made to have traditional paper sessions (rather than high-density sessions), with about five papers per session, in order to give scholars sufficient time to present and receive feedback on their work. This meant there were just 19 slots available (for an overall **acceptance rate of about 35%**), so only a few research-in-progress submissions were accepted.

It's my hope we can get a few more sessions in 2027 to accommodate the volume of good work BAMJ has routinely begun to solicit, so that more scholars benefit from robust conference feedback. The steady growth in our division's submissions over the last several years is a testament to all the great work you and your students are producing, and I'm confident AEJMC will take notice.

The full list of the 2026 BAMJ research sessions is on pages 5 and 6. As they always do, this year's projects touch on very timely issues, from the incursion of AI into the news space to changing definitions of broadcast identity (often mediated by social platforms) to coverage of politically-charged news events.

Thanks again to everyone who submitted a paper and/or served as a reviewer, as well as to those folks who've agreed to become discussants or moderators for these sessions. Also, please congratulate this year's BAMJ Reviewer of the Year, Lindsey Conlin Maxwell, who stepped up repeatedly to help the reviewing process come to a successful conclusion.

Wednesday, August 5

10:15 to 11:30 a.m. | Bissonet (3rd floor)

Scholar-to-Scholar (Poster) Refereed Research Paper Session

Discussant: Marcus Funk, Sam Houston State

- AI in Video Journalism: Educator Attitudes and Innovation Diffusion
Jason Cain and Deb Wenger, Mississippi
- Bypassing the Gate: How Google's AI-Generated Summaries Reshape News Distribution and Consumption
Taeyoung Lee, Junghyun Moon, Khamadi Shitemi and Umer Farooq, Indiana

- AI Labels as Heuristic Cues: How They Shape Audience Information Processing and Behavioral Responses—An Experimental Study Integrating HSM and EPPM
Yujun Zeng, East China Normal
- AI vs. Human News Anchor in Agenda Setting? The Mediating Role of Anthropomorphism and Credibility on Perceived Issue Importance
Nalae Hong, Bixuan Ren and Lars Willnat, Syracuse
- Stormchasing and the Performative Thrill of Live Disaster Media
Kaitlyn Serafin, Brady Quinn, Grace Smith, Teodora Tavares, Grace Ficara, Victoria Heath and Ava Jochims, South Florida and Valerie Belair-Gagnon, Minnesota; and Gregory Perrault, South Florida

3:30 to 4:45 p.m. | Balcony I (4th floor)

Refereed Research Paper Session: “Broadcast News Identity in a Partisan Landscape”

Moderating/Presiding: Volha Kananovich, Appalachian State

Discussant: Carey Higgins-Dobney, Kentucky

- “We earned it, we earned capital through what we do”: Black Broadcast Journalists’ Changing Online and Offline Norms
Denetra Walker, Georgia
- Journalistic Authority as Epistemic Power: Framing and Ideology in Partisan News Talk
Manwar Hossain, Colorado State
- Air America Radio: A Proleptic Media Company
David Dowling, Iowa and Daniel Max Barth, Columbia
- “CBS Is Dead to Me”: Ideological Conflict and Authority Collapse in CBS News’ Crisis
David Wolfgang, Colorado State
- “You have to sell them as much as they’re trying to sell you”: US Local TV News Directors’ Perspectives on the Struggle to Hire Reporters and Producers
Nataliya Roman, Berrin Beasley and John Parmelee, North Florida and Kathryn Bonfield, Southern California

Thursday, August 6

11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. | Studio 1 (2nd floor)

Refereed Research Paper Session: “The Digital Lens: Analyzing How Online Platforms Are Shaping Perceptions of News People and Their Messages”

Moderating/Presiding: Damilola Oduolowu, South Carolina

Discussant: Beth Concepcion, Linfield

- Are You Paying Attention? Exploring News Perceptions Across Online Platforms
Md Oliullah, Jessica Zimmerman, Elizabeth Flores, Taylor Clark, Hannah Lisenbee and Glenn Leshner, Oklahoma

- Temporal Constraints of Mobile Engagement: Implications for Attention to News and Digital Content
Ronald Yaros, Maryland
- The Duality of Digital Journalism: Recontextualizing Professionals and Platform-Native Commentators on YouTube
Yinqiao Zhao and Luwei Rose Luqiu, Hong Kong Baptist
- Gatekeeping in Mobile Journalism: A Comparative Framework for Autonomous and Constrained Media Environments
Mamunor Rashid, Colorado
- [RiP] Reporting For Your Page: An Experiment on Delivery Style, News Topic, and Journalistic Credibility on TikTok
Alejandro Hernandez, Texas

Friday, August 7

4:45 to 6 p.m. | Salon A (3rd floor)

Top Refereed Research Paper Session

Moderating/Presiding: Stan Jastrzebski, Missouri

Discussant: Lindsey Conlin Maxwell, Southern Mississippi (BAMJ Reviewer of the Year)

- Best Faculty Paper: Enhancing Broadcast News or Disrupting It?: Examining the Impact of AI News Anchors on Credibility, Likability, and Viewer Discomfort
Soo Young Shin, Danford Zirugo and Sean Sadri, Alabama
- Best Student Paper: 'Slayyyy news mommy': Computational Topic Modeling of TikTok Comments About Women Broadcast Journalists
Anjelica Ortiz and Sarah Witmer, Iowa
- Best Faculty Research-in-Progress: Reconstructing the Storm: A Comparative Critical Discourse Analysis of CNN's Website Headlines and Social Media Captions
Ryan Thomas and Emmanuel Ejigboye, Washington State
- Best Student Research-in-Progress: The Gen Z Paradox: Willingness to Speak Out About the Israel-Gaza Conflict in an Increasingly Unforgiving Online/Offline Space
Zienab Shoieb, David Atkin, Lili Romann and John Christensen, Connecticut

ELECTRONIC NEWS UPDATE

Debora Wenger, Mississippi (editor-in-chief)

Electronic News is closing out a strong year, with gains in submissions, visibility and scholarly impact. The journal received 67 original manuscript submissions in 2025—nearly double the previous year's total—and has continued that momentum with 22 submissions during the first five months of 2026.

Those manuscripts also reflected the journal's growing international reach, with submissions from researchers across North America, Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Our Impact Factor increased from 1.4 to 1.7, and our ranking among communication journals improved from 111th to 97th out of 227 titles. Total citations rose by 15%, and the five-year Impact Factor climbed from 1.3 to 1.7. *Electronic News* also posted a CiteScore of 2.9—a 53% increase from the previous year—and improved its Scopus communication ranking to 172nd out of 541 journals. In all, *Electronic News* recorded more than 34,500 full-text downloads in 2025, while 2026 had already generated more than 12,600 downloads through May.

Authors received an initial decision in a median of just two days in both 2025 and 2026, and thanks to our wonderful reviewers, accepted manuscripts moved from acceptance to online publication in a median of 27 days.

Building on that momentum, *Electronic News* is now calling for manuscripts for a special issue focused on artificial intelligence in broadcast and mobile journalism environments. The issue will explore how AI is changing newsroom practices, content production, distribution, audience engagement, professional roles and the ethical responsibilities of journalists. Researchers examining AI's implications for electronic journalism are encouraged to submit their work.



See you in New Orleans!