

AEJMC: The Next 100 Years
Moving Into Tomorrow

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Imagine AEJMC's possibilities...

It is summer 2012 AEJMC was founded 100 years ago

- *Looking for a collaborator for a grant proposal, assistant professor Joe Research logged onto the Scholar-Link-Up section of the AEJMC website and posted his query. A day later he had five responders, one of whom looked perfect to help with the \$1 million project. To date, more than 50 scholars have been matched through the service.*
- *Professor Maryanne Tenure met with four graduate students at the March AEJMC Northwest Regional Conference. Within an hour, the senior scholar provided valuable feedback on the students' research, and shared suggestions on possible publications for the work. In three other regions of the country, similar mentoring is taking place at AEJMC regional conferences.*
- *Approaching graduation, doctoral student M.C. Journal visited the AEJMC Job Network once a week. He applied online for several positions and set up three interviews for the August AEJMC convention in New York City. The Job Network, featuring the latest academic, agency and media industry openings, is a members-only service that racks up half a million hits each month.*
- *AEJMC President Susan Leader testifies before a congressional panel about the Telecommunications Act of 2012. Thousands of Americans benefit from her insights about citizens' access to public information as her remarks are broadcast for weeks on C-SPAN.*
- *A team of AEJMC leaders and members leaves for Mumbai to conduct an international workshop for AEJMC members on preparing journalists and public relations practitioners to offer better health care information in developing nations.*
- *The Ford Foundation-funded AEJMC Idea Institute will hold an interdisciplinary meeting of media industry leaders, journalism educators, government policy makers, international political scholars, and foundation representatives to share ideas on how media can provide better civic information in multiple media formats.*

The Possibilities Begin Here

It is summer 2008. How do we move forward to this imagined future with more year-round services and greater input into the issues impacting the discipline? What will our members need in the next century? How will the changes in our communication media affect the way we educate students and deliver services?

To answer those questions AEJMC has spent the past 18 months exploring that future through a systemic and far-reaching strategic planning process. More than 1,000 members have participated in various stages of the process, from filling out an online survey, to writing reports for recent task forces, to taking part in one of the four group discussions taking place at meetings. It has been exciting and uplifting to hear the ideas and possibilities that will take AEJMC into its next century.

To move forward in that next century, members said that AEJMC must first look inward to identify its common ground and values. The outcome of this process will be a “living” plan of action that will be re-examined and assessed each year, continually refined to keep the association focused and relevant as the world and its needs change.

Emerging Themes: Where We Are Now?

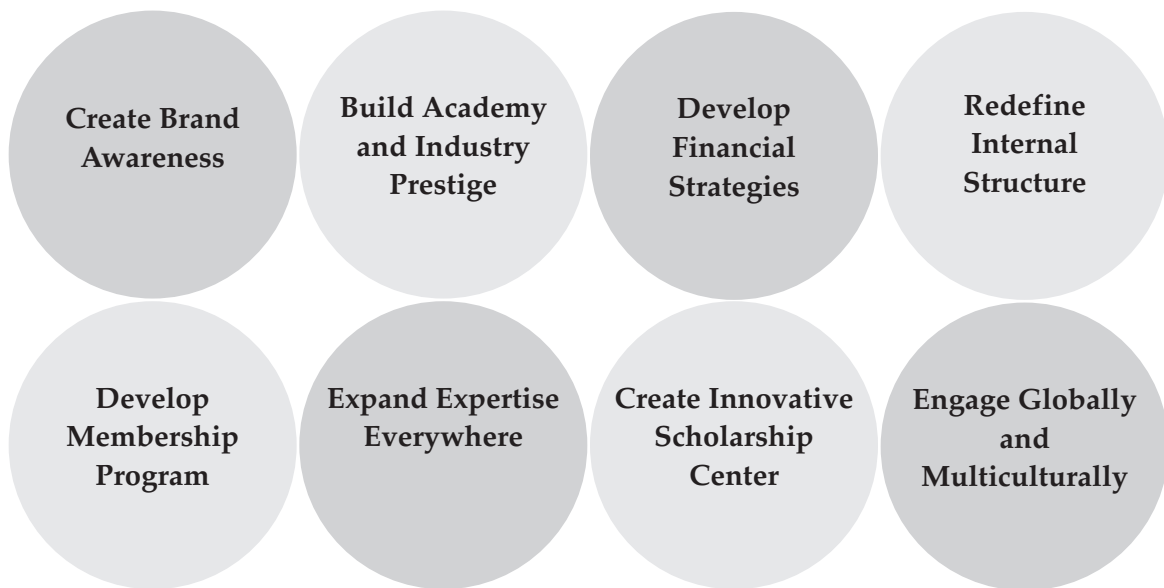
In the first phase of the strategic planning process AEJMC spent many months scanning the current environment, taking stock of the association’s strengths and weaknesses, as well as listening to what members had to say about future organizational potential. Five themes bubbled up from AEJMC members during phase one:

- 1** **We need a cohesive and relevant public voice.**
AEJMC needs to lead at a time of change and uncertainty in our academic disciplines and in the media fields we study. We should innovate and influence other constituencies, and not simply follow their leads, by asserting our values in the social debates.
- 2** **We need to debate and define our core values.**
AEJMC needs to better understand and articulate the values we hold in common. AEJMC should reassess our vision and mission, and explore an association-wide discussion and development of our core values.
- 3** **We need to respond to changes in the environment.**
Because our society is changing and becoming more diverse, AEJMC needs to guide change and define standards in both universities and media industries, transformed by technology and new business practices.
- 4** **We need to offer more member services, interaction and connection.**
As AEJMC grows, the demands on our members also grow. AEJMC needs to expand services to its members beyond the convention, creating year-round services to meet needs.
- 5** **We need to improve our partnerships with media industries.**
As transition sweeps the field, AEJMC needs to assist media through the changes. AEJMC needs to find innovative ways to provide services to industry through partnerships that are mutually beneficial for media and our members.

Using these themes as discussion points, small group meetings of AEJMC members in the summer and fall of 2007 continued building a framework of ideas and issues, dreams and needs. Materials on the AEJMC Website also sought feedback from members. Each focus group and roundtable added to the depth of the discussion and set the stage for the next level of thinking, moving the plan forward to practical visions, then to contradictions, and finally to strategic directions.

Strategic Directions to Guide the Future

In December 2007 another group of 45 AEJMC leaders met in St. Louis to sift through the work of three previous focus groups, and our full-scale environmental scan. After two days, the group had developed a foundation of strategic directions to guide our future. **Eight Strategic Directions** were identified by members in the course of the 18-month envisioning process:



The organization needs to **Create Brand Awareness**, clearly articulating to itself and the rest of the world what AEJMC is and does. This process can lead to a needed influence in the academy and the industries into which our students and our research can move successfully. Tactics suggested include revising the mission and articulating and operationalizing the association's core values. It could include consideration of a name change to better communicate internally and externally, and the development of a variety of publicity and outreach tools.

Brand awareness is a key to **Building Academy and Industry Prestige**, Reputation and Influence. As a recognized leader, the association could consider conducting town hall meetings with peers, higher administration and professionals. It could create more media awards, including recognition for accomplishments in scholastic journalism. It could consider empowering the president to speak out on key communication issues, and relocating headquarters to both signal and facilitate interactions with major industry leaders.

To make change possible, AEJMC needs to **Develop Financial Strategies** in line with its long-term vision. Tactics could include hiring a fundraising staff, developing a plan for event fundraising, developing financial streams beyond dues and convention income, and building an endowment. AEJMC needs to generate income via year-round programs and could ask headquarters staff to explore cost saving methods like distributing publications online.

Similarly, to best use and showcase association strength, AEJMC might **Redefine its Internal Structure**. It may be time, given increasing pressures for convention slots and association resources, to consider an interests inventory to determine the best use of the division and interest group structure. It may be time to consider unifying the organization across divisions and interest groups, across industry interests and research methodologies. The association could develop additional ways to promote and reward members' leadership service. It may also be appropriate to re-examine and possibly increase Board membership.

Members are the strength of the organization, and AEJMC must **Develop its Membership Program** to more effectively recruit, retain and engage members at all levels, with particular attention to international and multicultural realities and opportunities. This could include membership drives to industry and the academy; development of new member tiers including undergraduate students; and establishment of member recruitment incentives. It could also include member services in the form of increased regional conventions.

Given the importance to the academy of building a knowledge base, AEJMC must contribute to developing the scholarship of its members and **Expand its Expertise**. Tactics could include developing a web network for scholars, creating an experts hotline and a central information database to enhance accessibility of research among scholars and industries, and finding a way to showcase research presented at conventions and regional conferences.

In support of the above, AEJMC must **Create an Innovative Scholarship Center**, which could entail establishing research incubators, the exchange of research training, and the creation of research fellowships, teaching fellowships, online mentoring, and interdisciplinary workshops

In seeking growth and influence, the association must **Engage Globally and Multiculturally**. It must signal by its own structure and activities the value of international and multicultural teaching, research and service. It must champion global free expression and deep democracy. It must intensify the global agenda through programming, publications, and member involvement. To further these ends it must more effectively tap governmental funding for international exchange and development.

Some of the potential tactics for realizing each of these eight directions may seem more radical than others, such as the possibility of a name change, divisional restructuring and

headquarters relocation, which will require careful consideration. If adopted, they will involve a good deal of courage on the part of AEJMC members. Some tactics may amplify what is already being done, such as more media awards, more effective web usage and more regional conferences. All can exploit the considerable talent in the organization to make AEJMC *THE* influential source in the academy and the industry.

Looking Back and Looking Ahead

The future being plotted for AEJMC builds on the history of the association and its early visionary leaders. When **Willard Bleyer** founded the American Association of Teachers of Journalism in 1912, his vision and rhetoric were tightly focused on newspapers as the centerpiece of a “profession” that fundamentally consisted of reporters, editors, compositors, press operators and advertising salesmen. Young boys were tasked with hawking the papers on the streets.

Despite their prescience and their commitment to professionalize the emerging discipline of journalism education, neither Bleyer, a professor at the University of Wisconsin, nor any of his 23 academic and newspaper industry counterparts could have imagined what would happen to newspapers during the next 96 years.



The early debates of Bleyer and his colleagues have not disappeared, even while the parameters and mission of journalism education have expanded to boundless areas of study. There are seemingly endless descriptions of what constitutes the universe of communication, whether it be “mass,” “public,” “integrated” or any of the other forms that now look very little like the relatively simple discipline of early 20th century newspaper journalism.

The Newspaper Division today still is AEJMC’s largest, but it no longer has a dominant position in the organization. Mass Communication & Society and Public Relations are nearly as large and two-thirds of all members belong to one of those groups. In the 21st century, then, the emphasis must be on mass communication (and its derivative fields) as much as on journalism.

On the professional front, the industries of public communication face a number of challenges related to the media’s role in society and democracy, a role that remains essential but dramatically different from that envisioned by Bleyer. In a digital, multimedia, multiplatform world, it is increasingly difficult to define journalism and all the fields of public communication. Even more confusing is the role that current and future educators will play in the refocusing and redevelopment of media and its industries, workers and products.

In 2007, AEJMC celebrated its 95th year. The association has grown from two dozen members in 1912 to almost 4,000 worldwide, with 17 divisions, 9 interest groups and 2 commissions. It has a permanent headquarters in Columbia, S.C. with 8 full-time staff. It has made several connections to professional groups, other academic associations, universities and government officials who want to build partnerships with the oldest and most successful association for mass communication education.

What has happened to AEJMC is no different from what occurs during the growth and development of any highly successful nonprofit organization over time, according to the book *Navigating the Organizational Life Cycle* by Paul Connolly. At first, loyalty is the primary value, with most members sacrificing for the good of the organization. Eventually, though, the momentum of success draws new types of members who are less likely to commit but appreciate all the benefits of belonging. The organization becomes more structured to address new member needs, which draws even more members in a cycle that limits agility, stretches resources, and renders the organization less responsive.

Such a cycle reaches a point at which renewal is required, where it must examine its vision, mission, objectives and foci. This is where AEJMC found itself in 2006. To continue to be relevant, an association must survey its members, scan its environment, think deeply about the future, then create and articulate strategically and clearly a plan to generate new resources and funding for new ideas and the next cycles of membership growth. The plan needs to endure, to be a living document, one that inspires while providing a practical and practicable blueprint designed to adapt to change. Finally, it must be a document that promotes and manages healthy and robust growth.

An Overview of the Strategic Planning Process

In 2006, after nearly a century of consistent growth in membership and mission, AEJMC's leadership set out on a strategic planning process designed to enhance its resources and develop the organization's potential to serve its members, divisions, special interest groups, committees and outside constituencies.

The AEJMC strategic planning process was officially born in December 2006, at the Board of Directors' winter meeting in New Orleans. Working with a \$25,000 "challenge grant" for strategic planning from a consortium of the Knight Foundation, the Ford Foundation and the Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation, AEJMC board members developed a process that would elicit from members as much feedback and involvement as possible.

Under the direction of then-President Wayne Wanta of the University of Missouri, the board created the process and weighed the merits of various presentations by outside consultants seeking to guide the effort.

AEJMC Strategic Plan Timeline



The board of directors hired Milano Harden, president of The Genius Group, and Christina Graf, president of Flourish!, as the consulting team. The leadership also appointed Alex Tan of Washington State University, and AEJMC past president, to head a Strategic Plan Design Team (SPDT) that included Leo Jeffres, Cleveland State University, long-time AEJMC member and senior scholar; Sharon Murphy, Bradley University, AEJMC past president; Suzette Heiman, University of Missouri, former Council of Divisions Chair; Jan Slater, University of Illinois, 2005-07 Council of Divisions Chair; Felecia Jones Ross, Ohio State University, former chair of the Commission on the Status of Minorities; David Coulson, member-at-large, former head of Mass Comm & Society Division; and Mich Sineath, AEJMC Central Office, public relations and marketing specialist.

Coulson was charged to Chair a writing team to capture the work and results. Other writing team members included Fred Blevens, Florida International University; Ardyth Sohn, University of Nevada at Las Vegas; Von Whitmore, Kent State University; Jennifer McGill, Executive Director of AEJMC; and Sineath, who was also charged with coordinating the work of the various committees, the consultants and the AEJMC leadership. (*AEJMC News*, May 2007) An 18-month strategic planning timeline (March 2007-August 2008) was set and the SPDT was charged with its responsibilities.

AEJMC Mission and Core Values

Two areas that generated discussion during the early strategic planning process were the association’s mission and core values. The current AEJMC mission statement, adopted in the mid 1970s, was at the heart of the strategic plan discussions. It is the overriding principle that has guided the association’s work for almost 40 years. It is the first Article in our

Constitution, and forms the basis for our non-profit status. It states:

AEJMC's purpose is the improvement of education in journalism and mass communication to the end of achieving better professional practice, a better informed public, and wider human understanding.

Although the mission statement did not stipulate specific core values, the charges for accomplishing the mission were clear.

We seek to achieve this purpose by:

- encouraging high academic and professional standards for education in mass communication**
- fostering scholarly research and inquiry in mass communication and facilitating the publication and distribution to the public of reports based on such activity**
- supporting freedom of communication consonant with the ideal expressed in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.**

As AEJMC began its strategic planning process, work was already underway for a fresh look at AEJMC's values. A Task Force on Ethics, appointed in spring 2004 by incoming AEJMC President Mary Alice Shaver of the University of Central Florida, was charged with creating an ethics code that would, in its foundation, encompass a new set of core values that might be used to guide the whole organization.

Chaired by Linda Steiner of the University of Maryland, the Committee has proposed a set of specific core values as part of an AEJMC Code of Ethics. The membership will vote on the Code of Ethics and the core values during the 2008 Convention in Chicago. These have already been approved by the Code of Ethics Committee members and by the three AEJMC elected standing committees, which helped draft the wording of the proposed code:

Preamble: AEJMC members are educators, scholars and advocates of free and responsible journalism and media, and free inquiry in pursuit of knowledge. We are committed to fulfilling our responsibilities with high standards of professional competence and integrity in the service of our discipline, peers, students, institutions, and society. We adhere to the following core values:

FIDELITY — AEJMC members value truth-telling, promise-keeping, and faithfulness to our discipline and stakeholders.

JUSTICE — AEJMC members strive for fairness, impartiality, and distributive justice in our relationships with peers, students, and other stakeholders. We celebrate and promote diversity.

ACCOUNTABILITY — AEJMC members act with openness and transparency in their scholarship, teaching and service roles.

CARE — AEJMC members act with respect, sensitivity, consideration of others, compassion, and mercy. We try to protect others from abuse and coercion.

The AEJMC membership will vote in Chicago in August 2008 on both the code of ethics (including the core values) and the eight strategic directions. The outcome of the vote will determine the next steps in the planning process. A positive vote on both will allow the core values to serve as a framework for turning the strategic directions into a goal- and objective-driven plan for tomorrow. These core values, if approved, will also fulfill the intent of Emerging Theme 2, which called for debating and defining our core values. A tentative timetable would have a fully-developed plan ready to implement by early 2009.

Getting The Lay of the AEJMC Landscape

As the SPDT members began their work, they recognized the need for a clear picture of the current state of the association. An environmental scan was the strategy used to tap into members' true feelings, thoughts and opinions about the association. Phase One of the environmental scan ran from April to May 2007 and involved an examination of recent AEJMC reports, and related reports from the Carnegie Foundation and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Committee members poured over multiple studies and surveys from the past decade, ranging from Task Force reports to the association's most recent census. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats discovered through the SWOT analysis laid the foundation for the membership survey that would follow. (See Appendix A for the AEJMC Environmental Scan: Context for the Survey.)

Strengths

- Actively involved membership;
- Vibrant and significant organization;
- High ethical and teaching standards;
- Strong conference attendance;
- High quality research journals;
- Strong liaison with professional and academic organizations;
- Commitment to greater diversity in graduate student enrollment;
- Solid financial health.

Opportunities

- To become the conscience and moral voice of professional journalism;
- To display a larger role in continuing education for professionals;
- To help develop citizen scholars;
- To improve relationships with international scholars;
- To recommend guidelines for ethical research;
- To improve integrity of journal review process;
- To enhance diversity efforts.

Weaknesses

- Misperception of higher education's adoption of new media;
- Organization's name not reflective of current digital revolution;
- Lack in many AEJMC-affiliated programs of a language proficiency requirement, needed to respond to the global environment;
- Debate over theoretical versus practical education in the academy;
- Lack of diversity and cultural awareness;
- Inconsistencies in standards for promotion and tenure;
- Inconsistencies in review process for papers.

Threats

- Turmoil and instability associated with technological changes;
- The trend away from tenure-track positions;
- "The academy versus the real world;"
- Dwindling philanthropic and state investments in journalism education;
- Competition for the best and brightest students;
- Financial constraints and failing levels of commitment;
- Crisis of public confidence;
- Limited convergence thinking and planning.

Surveying the Membership

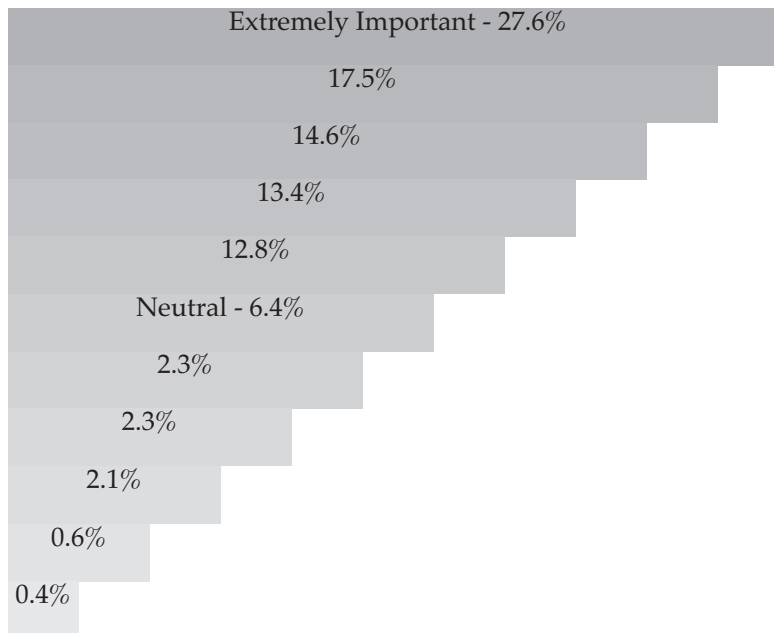
Phase Two of the environmental scan continued from May through June 2007. That's when AEJMC members responded to an online survey designed in effect to "pick their brains" regarding the status and future of AEJMC. As incentives to participate in the survey, two respondents were randomly selected to receive free registration for the 2007 Convention and a free year of AEJMC membership (*AEJMC News*, July 2007).

There were five hundred one (501) respondents. Most (98.5%) were AEJMC members and had recently attended (79%) or presented papers at the national convention (54%). Instructors (24%), assistant (24%) and associate professors (21%) were the most frequent participants. Deans (5%) and professionals (3%) responded the least. The majority of the survey respondents (52%) worked in JMC departments or schools, at comprehensive research universities (43%) and had professional experience (92%) in the field. (See Appendix B for the AEJMC Survey Report.)

Survey Results

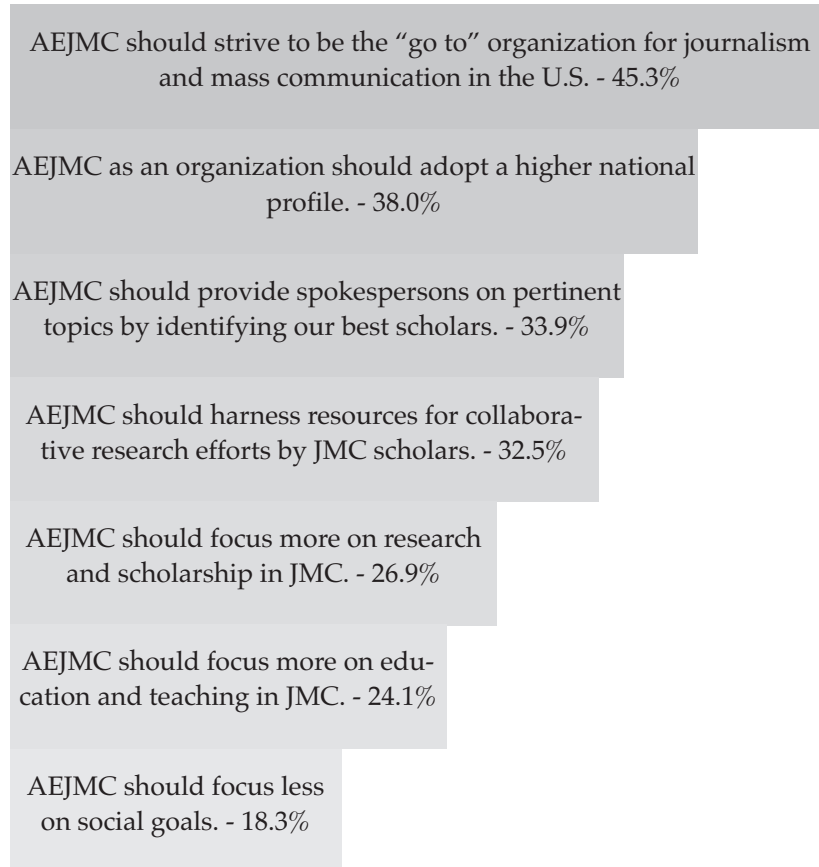
While AEJMC members appear to think well of the organization, there is certainly room for improvement. When asked to rate the importance of AEJMC to them as individuals, the mean response was 7.42 on a 0-10 scale, where zero is unimportant, 5 is neutral and 10 is extremely important. Almost 60% of respondents rated it 8 or higher.

How important is AEJMC?



Most of the participants thought that AEJMC should adopt a higher national profile by striving to be the “go to” American organization for journalism and mass communication issues; as well as provide spokespersons on pertinent industry topics.

What should AEJMC do?



In open-ended questions about what AEJMC should be doing in the future, 119 of 330 (36%) respondents positively saw the future for the Association as bright; while 58 of 330 (17.5%) painted a bleak or troubled outlook. Other open-ended questions regarding AEJMC weaknesses paralleled key internal issues from the SWOT Analysis, including professional disconnect, slow technology adoption, and weak international focus.

Other Critical Issues

When asked to rate their preference on the importance of 34 areas of interest, respondents ranked teaching (9.4), research (9.4) and technology (9.3) as the top three choices and development communication (6.4), religion (6.2) and film (5.6) the lowest. The survey length limited the number of areas that could be included. The 34 areas of interest that were uli-

mately selected were based upon AEJMC divisions and interest groups, and included items from the environmental scan and previous studies. (See Appendix C for the complete rankings of the 34 areas.)

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of AEJMC's current 17 AEJMC divisions, two commissions and 10 interest groups using a 0-10 scale, where zero is "totally unimportant," 5 is "unfamiliar with" and 10 is "extremely important."

The Media Ethics Division topped the descending order list as extremely important (8.9), followed by the Mass Communication and Society Division (8.7), and Communication Technology Division, Communication Theory & Methodology Division and the Law & Policy Division all with a 8.6. (See Appendix D for the complete rankings of AEJMC divisions, commissions and interest groups.)

Envisioning the Future

As the survey results reflect, the opinions of AEJMC members have been crucial throughout the strategic planning process. With the giveaway of a 2008 Convention registration as an incentive for participation, design team members sponsored a roundtable discussion during the 2007 annual meeting in Washington, D.C. Featuring a report on the SWOT analysis and online survey results, the discussion led by Council of Divisions Chair Jan Slater and consultants from The Genius Group, gave association members another opportunity to offer their views and to brainstorm about the future. Results of the roundtable discussions were shared with members through the AEJMC newsletter and on the association's web site.

The next steps created by members and working groups in the planning process were: a) 3 to 5 year practical vision; b) contradictions; and c) strategic directions.

3 to 5 Year Practical Vision

Every strategic plan strives to develop a practical but challenging 3 to 5 year plan that is tied to resources as well as long-term goals. A well-conceived plan provides a realistic look at what is possible, what is probable and what is a stretch for an organization to achieve. Such an analysis considers challenges to the goals, realistic assessment of resources and timelines and contingency plans for dealing with unforeseen opportunities or disasters. Through such analysis, an organization prepares itself not only for quick-response and proactive options but also for predictable fluctuations.

In setting a practical and realistic vision it has been critical to have members describe the organization as they see it now and as they wish it to be in the future. The key question posed to more than 40 members during a strategic planning session in August 2007 was, "What must be in place in 3 to 5 years for AEJMC to reach its full potential?" (See Appendix E for the complete Practical Vision Chart.)

The discussion was frank and ambitious, and resulted in eight practical vision statements:

8 Practical Vision Statements

Strengthened shared core values while respecting intellectual interests

Full-service marketing and communication infrastructure

Expanded staff capacity and resources to support fundraising and growth

Evaluated and expanded member services and programs

Professional and public partnerships and outreach

AEJMC is renamed, reorganized, refocused on expertise externally

**Substantial international membership and be recognized
as the global leader in JMC Education**

**Systematic process for identifying, recruiting and
involving JMC educators and students**

These eight vision statements encompass several major ideas that should drive AEJMC's future. The association needs to reflect its vision and mission with values that span internal boundaries between divisions and interest groups. We need to create an infrastructure that embraces commonality and allows progressive movement as one cohesive organization. In order to sustain its values over multiple years, the association needs to support growth in our community and develop a mechanism to create more continuity for leaders.

The vision includes a stronger leadership role for the association to monitor, direct, and assess change that influences media, education and society. AEJMC also must voice its concern on issues such as social change and diversity, research and scholarship, teaching and media literacy, media and democracy and student learning by committing resources and leadership attention to each area of importance.

While there are contradictions and strategic directions inherent in each of the above vision areas, it is also clear that recent debate has helped the membership settle on some key areas of agreement. They include:

- AEJMC needs to identify and meet the challenges of its second century, including the possibility of becoming a global leader in major discussions and initiatives about our field.
- AEJMC needs to develop an international structure that projects expertise as one of its key offerings.
- AEJMC needs to consider a name change if members agree it does not accurately communicate the organization's values to internal and external constituents.
- AEJMC needs to consider developing a full-service marketing and communications infrastructure to better inform members and constituents of the expertise and services we offer.

Contradictions

While members have been optimistic and ambitious in their goal setting, they have also identified patterns of behavior, attitudes and structures, which block movement toward progress in meeting the vision and mission statements. In August 2007 members worked on a list of items that could be considered stumbling blocks to success. An even dozen items were identified and they include the following: (See Appendix F for the complete Contradictions chart.)

• Insufficient Incentive to Change

Like every organization, AEJMC, in attempting to organize itself to better meet members' needs, has developed some bureaucracies that can impede change. We cherish our history and traditions and don't feel comfortable when they seem threatened.

• Organizational Incentives Tied to Specializations

Different individuals and groups within AEJMC have sometimes conflicting priorities, making universal support of core values difficult. Fears have been expressed that a traditional tendency to specialize and create divisions has already negatively impacted collective decision-making abilities within the organization, and that a lack of clear mechanisms

for controlling growth of interest groups has resulted in further scattering of the collective.

- **Restrictive Recruitment Measures**

There's little or no recruitment before graduate school into AEJMC, ignoring scholastic journalism, which is not seen as fertile recruitment territory, and the organization has a narrow view regarding reaching into new groups for members.

- **Limited Funding Sources**

AEJMC as an organization seems not to effectively identify and effectively compete for funding. At the same time it has an unsophisticated uni-dimensional revenue stream, relying mainly on dues and conference registrations.

- **Self-Fulfilling Insecurity**

The organization has little experience in successfully identifying and competing for potential international partners and no meaningful visibility on national or global stages of importance to our field. Is this because we don't think highly enough of ourselves as a player organization?

- **Limited Resources**

AEJMC headquarters has limited office space, budgetary constraints and a small, though, hard-working and effective staff.

- **Unidentified Sustainable Core Values**

The organization and its members work within a context of an unstable industry environment and no universal operational definition for the "field" in which we teach and do research.

- **Conflicting Member Expectations and Obligations**

AEJMC leaders are volunteers and there is an uneven degree of respect and support for AEJMC service at members' home institutions.

- **Outdated National View and Internal Perceptions of Journalism Education**

The parochial national views of journalism and mass communication education makes it difficult to develop a strong outward identity.

- **Outdated View of Member Services**

There is a disconnect for some members between what members and external audiences want from AEJMC and what is delivered, and a constricted default view of what constitutes member services.

- **Untapped Member Expertise**

The organization seems unable to appropriately communicate AEJMC expertise. We do not productively utilize the public relations, advertising and marketing resources of our

members but tend to rely more on outside experts.

- **JMC Perceived as Peripheral to Campus Mission**

There is a perceptible lack on most campuses of suitable university budget allocation to our field. This lack of support communicates an overall lack of respect for AEJMC and the faculty and students it represents.

When members examined these 12 potential roadblocks to success, they saw intriguing challenges that stimulated further analyses. For instance, the mission and vision statements must be clear and acceptable to the members before any strategic plan will work. What is outdated in the view of the organization must be jettisoned without threatening the institutional values that are important and cherished by members.

The role of the organization is not clear in the transitional industry environment, which has altered traditional industry practices and expectations for products, services and employees. In an era when the professionals themselves cannot predict the future, AEJMC must take a stronger leadership role in research, development and education.

Another important revelation has been the continued lack of support and respect on campuses for the professional and research contributions of members of AEJMC. While other professional educators (i.e. law, business, medicine, engineering etc.) and their associations have been successful in articulating their value to the campus, AEJMC members continue to struggle with resources and other symbols of respect on campus.

Strategic Plan Implementation

If the strategic blueprint and its eight strategic directions are approved by the membership during the AEJMC Business Meeting Friday, August 8 at the 2008 Chicago Convention, a special Saturday work session will bring together the incoming AEJMC Board of Directors and the newly-appointed Strategic Plan Implementation Committee to turn the directions into a full implementation plan with goals, objectives and strategies.

The creation of the nine-member Implementation Committee was approved by the AEJMC membership during the August 2007 Convention in Washington, DC. Article VII of the AEJMC Bylaws outlines the work of the committee:

“Section 13: The appointed standing Committee on Strategic Plan Implementation shall be responsible for recommending to the AEJMC Board priorities, strategies and programs that will facilitate the goals for any Strategic Plan adopted by the membership. The committee will continually evaluate the plan’s goals and objectives to ensure it continues to be responsive to the changing environment and needs of the membership.”

Specific duties of the committee are:

- Develop goals, objectives and strategies for the strategic directions approved by the membership, in conjunction with the Board of Directors
- Prioritize the objectives and strategies
- After the priorities have been approved by the AEJMC Board of Directors, the committee will create a Year-1, Year 2, Year-3 action plan for implementation.
- The committee should also develop preliminary plans for these strategies, including responsible group and budget, if needed.
- The committee is responsible for developing and implementing the strategies each year.
- Each year the committee will assess the progress on the strategies, and re-visit and adapt the strategies and plan as needed.
- All committee recommendations and actions will go to the AEJMC Board of Directors for approval
- The committee will report twice a year to the AEJMC Board of Directors, and more often via email, if necessary, and to the membership once a year.

Members of the 2008-09 Strategic Plan Implementation Committee will be announced at the Chicago Convention.

Continuing Member Involvement

While the Implementation Committee will have specific duties to develop and monitor the plan, AEJMC members will remain a crucial part of the process. In the course of implementing Strategic Plan goals and objectives, any recommended structural or procedural changes within the association and how it operates will still need membership approval. The membership will continue to be involved in the work of the Strategic Plan.

The ultimate goal, of course, is to create a “living” strategic plan that will continue to draw on the energy of the future, the loyal members as well as those who do not yet know their interest in or need for belonging. Doing so will allow AEJMC to be proactive in its change and avoid the pitfalls of organizations that adapt only by reaction. Regular assessment that develops clear strategies and benchmarks will guide our change.

This reexamination of AEJMC at the beginning of the 21st century is as important as the work of Willard Bleyer, Walter Williams who created the world’s first School of Journalism at Missouri in 1908, and the 22 others who gathered in November 1912 in Chicago. At stake is a century likely to generate new needs and radical changes in media professions, higher education, membership and diversity.

AEJMC in its next 100 years: turning our possibilities into our realities...

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To download a complete list of all documents relating to and deriving from the AEJMC Strategic Plan, please visit the AEJMC Web site at:

http://aejmc.org/_strategicplan/index.php

A: Environmental Scan: Context for the Survey

B: Survey Report

To download the entire Environmental Scan, including answers provided by 501 respondents, please visit the AEJMC Web site at:

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C: Ranked 34 Areas of Interest

D: Divisions, Commissions and Interest Groups by Ranking

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