1st Conference of the
Journalism & Communication Education Temporary Working Group
of the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA)

Call for Papers

Professional Communication Programs in Search for Identity

March 5-6, 2015
University of Trier, Germany
Deadline extension until Friday, Jan. 23, 2015!

Professional media systems are changing fast, driven by both technological and societal developments. Media convergence is blurring the boundaries between many formerly separate professional systems like journalism, PR, corporate communication, political communication, advertising. This is leading to hybrid models in communication education programs (like programs in "journalism and public relations") on one hand, as well as more and more specialized approaches on the other hand.

Educational systems have two important functions for professions: They can be stabilizing factors for systems in transition, as well as a vanguard of innovation and development. Work in the field of education for communication professions has traditionally been done within the boundaries of specific fields and has favored certain topics. However, in a time of converging media markets and professions, the professionalization of new markets, and the blurring of boundaries between formerly separate professions, it is important to reconsider media education's role from a more interdisciplinary and broader perspective.

The aim of this conference is to provide a forum for educational approaches for communication professions that witness a transition. We invite you to send in your contribution related to this aim: How are education programs affected by media convergence and changing job markets? What strategies are followed in order to meet these challenges? Which approaches are implemented and to what effect? Is it advisable to join forces, seek new alliances or is it more important than ever to specialize on core competencies, traditional values and skills? **In short: in a converging media environment, how do educational programs build an identity? How can they help students form *their* professional identities for an ever changing market?**

Here are three points that could especially be valuable to consider in this regard:

1. **Themes: The value of traditional and new topics**: Although matters of information gathering and distribution remain central for any civic society, media and communication studies has come to increasingly give attention to topics outside what we may call the traditional "news media"/"public discourse"-paradigm: matters of entertainment and culture, management, finances, etc. What is the significance of these topics for the identity of current and future educational programs? Which should be implemented and how?

2. **Approaches: "There is nothing so practical as a good theory"**[1]: Although questions of education didactic and practical issues of media education (what do we have to teach and how?) are more important than ever, education research in our field especially lacks **theoretical approaches**. What are, for example, the connections, relations and processes between educational systems and job markets, between education and practice? How do our educational systems develop and change? These and other questions are central to building identity for sustainable media programs.

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[1] Kurt Lewin

3. **Perspectives: Knowing the past to plan for the future**: Change is not about new media alone. The rapid technological developments in the markets we are educating for sometimes let us forget the developments that brought us there. However, an identity is always influenced by past experiences – successes as well as mistakes. A **historical perspective on media education** and its development may show us where we successfully confronted certain similar issues before, or where we went wrong.

The conference will feature two presentation formats:

• **Traditional conference presentations**:
For traditional conference presentations, please submit an abstract (max. 600 words, not including references), presenting research results and/or theoretical work relevant to the conference theme. Please outline the state of the study or research project, the research question(s) or hypotheses, findings and conclusion(s). In case of a theoretical presentation, please outline your argument, describing the issue you are tackling, the current state of research in this field and how your approach provides something new. We also encourage submitting work in progress, e.g. new theoretical or methodological ideas you want to discuss with peers at the conference. However, research projects that you want to present and that are not in the field yet (or only yield preliminary results by the time of the conference) should be fully developed and contribute to the theoretical and/or methodological debate.

• **Conference workshop proposals**: In addition to traditional panels, we would like to invite proposals for workshop sessions. These sessions could start with up to three short introductory talks (about 7 min.) followed by a moderated discussion, but we also welcome alternative workshop models. Sessions should deal with current practical, methodological or theoretical challenges of media education and should aim towards finding ways to meet these challenges. Proposals for workshop sessions should include a clearly defined workshop topic and goal, up to three presenters contributing, and a number of questions or assignments for the discussion. Please submit a short workshop abstract (max. 600 words) including short outlines of the individual presenter's topics.

True to this conference's aim, traditional presentations as well as workshops should seek to either include multiple educational fields (PR, journalism, advertising…) or address applicability/relevance of their topic for programs from different areas of communication education.

New deadline for abstract submission: Friday, Jan. 23, 2015
Accepted presenters will be informed by Monday, Feb. 2, 2015

Please submit abstracts as anonymized Word- or pdf-documents to either:

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cbarrera@unav.es
or
harnischmacher@uni-trier.de

Please include your author information (name, institution, contact) in the accompanying e-mail.
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