As we are all well aware, social media can easily spread disinformation, advance racist or sexist views, and generally exacerbate polarization, even between friends and family. The Media Analytics and Political Polarization (or MAPP) workshop that is currently being developed in JMC by Dr. Jacob Groshek is scheduled to be a two-day event that will include a series of recorded and live sessions to address these concerns and provide attendees with both conceptual knowledge and applied best practices. Importantly, the MAPP event is being built around attendees learning to use some of the most advanced social media analytics platforms, such as Meltwater, NodeXL, DiscoverText, and Cronycle to better understand misinformation and reduce polarization.

During the MAPP workshop, participants will learn to use and interpret media analytics in order to effectively engage with controversial, polarizing, and untrue content. The MAPP workshop will serve the interests of not just students, faculty and working professionals but almost anyone interested in learning to better navigate a complex, confusing, and hostile media environment. Learning to use and interpret social media data is a vital skill for nearly every industry, but just as critically, the MAPP workshop will incorporate speakers and platforms that will illuminate data driven research insights for managing polarization in both personal and professional lives.

This event is currently targeting a launch day of spring 2021, with more exciting details to follow. If you have any questions, please email Dr. Groshek, the Ross Beach Research Chair in Emerging Media Studies and workshop developer, directly at groshek@ksu.edu.
Dr. Katie Olsen’s research agenda deals with the gender gap in the world of advertising agencies, and she is currently working to publish a key piece of her dissertation. “The impetus for my doctoral dissertation was the alarming gender gap in advertising’s creative departments, Dr. Olsen said. She is collaborating with Dr. Dani LaGree, having established the foundation for long-term research focused on preparing the next generation of leaders in advertising and public relations. Dr. Olsen also has connections with faculty members who have since left the department. “We, along with (former JMC) Dr. Alec Tefertiller, are also working on a project examining how early-career professionals develop career social capital utilizing a national survey of early-career men and women in advertising and PR positions.”

Dr. Olsen earned her Bachelor’s in Journalism from the University of Missouri, her MBA from Rockhurst University, and her doctoral degree focused on student development in higher education from K-State. Dr. Olsen will be teaching MC 612 Gender Issues and the Media in the spring, and hopes to teach a qualitative research methods class in the future. This year, she serves as the AEJMC Midwinter Co-Chair for the Commission on the Status of Women.

Dr. Olsen also stays busy outside the classroom. “I have two little boys who keep our family busy. I love to be active, from kickboxing to running. I also love reading when I have the time, and my husband and I like exploring restaurants in other cities.”

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR KATIE OLSEN EXAMINES THE GENDER GAP IN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Katie Olsen’s research agenda deals with the gender gap in the world of advertising agencies, and she is currently working to publish a key piece of her dissertation. “The impetus for my doctoral dissertation was the alarming gender gap in advertising’s creative departments, Dr. Olsen said. She is collaborating with Dr. Dani LaGree, having established the foundation for long-term research focused on preparing the next generation of leaders in advertising and public relations. Dr. Olsen also has connections with faculty members who have since left the department. “We, along with (former JMC) Dr. Alec Tefertiller, are also working on a project examining how early-career professionals develop career social capital utilizing a national survey of early-career men and women in advertising and PR positions.”

Dr. Olsen earned her Bachelor’s in Journalism from the University of Missouri, her MBA from Rockhurst University, and her doctoral degree focused on student development in higher education from K-State. Dr. Olsen will be teaching MC 612 Gender Issues and the Media in the spring, and hopes to teach a qualitative research methods class in the future. This year, she serves as the AEJMC Midwinter Co-Chair for the Commission on the Status of Women.

Dr. Olsen also stays busy outside the classroom. “I have two little boys who keep our family busy. I love to be active, from kickboxing to running. I also love reading when I have the time, and my husband and I like exploring restaurants in other cities.”
Rachel Esses
Second-year online master's student Rachel Esses is originally from Atlanta, GA, where she earned a BA in Theater Studies from Emory University. "I spent a few years living in Kansas and particularly enjoyed my time in Manhattan and working at K-State! In June of 2019, my husband Levi and I moved to Emmitsburg, MD, for his job as Dean of Students at Mount St. Mary's University."

Why did you choose K-State?
I became familiar with the grad program in the Miller School when I was working as the Assistant Director of Outreach in the K-State office of Student Financial Assistance. I was disappointed that I didn't get started on the program while I was an employee of the university, but overjoyed when I realized there is a rigorous, robust online version of the grad program available through K-State Online. After getting settled into our new life in Maryland, I knew it was time to get started on my master's degree, and it was a no-brainer for me to apply to K-State.

On October 21, second-year master’s student Barikisu Issaka presented one of her research projects at the 2020 Research and the State graduate-student poster competition. Titled "Risk Perception and Self-Efficacy for Communicable Disease among African Immigrants in the United States," her presentation is based on a survey study she conducted with Dr. Nancy Muturi.

Immigrant populations are the most vulnerable to communicable diseases among ethnic minorities globally due to the poor physical, psychological, and social health outcomes and insufficient health care. The State of Kansas has many black immigrants, many of whom are refugees, students, military personnel, or other professionals. The goal of this study was to identify their level of risk perception, vulnerabilities, and self-efficacy in relation to media use and other communication-related factors through the lens of the protection motivation theory. Knowledge of the motivation and health seeking information by African immigrants will help the state to develop communication strategies that meet the needs of this particular group. This will also help reduce African immigrant mortality rate due to communicable diseases, which stems from lack of access to health communication and messages.

What are your research interests?
My current research focus is on the ways small, rural communities tell the story of their town to drive tourism and economic development. My interest in this area was inspired by my new home in Emmitsburg.

What are your long-term plans?
I have always wanted to teach, so I’m hoping this degree will lead to some opportunities to teach at the college level. Thanks to my research, I have also developed an interest in small town tourism marketing and development, so I am also considering a position in that field.

Any fun facts about yourself that you’d like to share?
My husband Levi and I are thrilled to announce the birth of our first child, a son. Emory Kash Esses was born in Frederick, MD, on Thursday, November 12, at 9:11am. He weighed 7 lbs, 10 oz and was 20 inches in length. We are all healthy and happy, and doing our best to sleep as much as possible!
CONGRATULATIONS

to master’s students Alisa Deeds (major professor Dr. Raluca Cozma) and Emily Wilson (major professor Dr. Nancy Muturi) on the successful defense of their capstone projects!

Alisa and Emily are the first students to graduate from our online master’s program, which launched Spring 2019.

❖

A WARM WELCOME to professors Alan Boyer and Ian Punnett to the JMC graduate faculty!

❖

HAPPY HOLIDAYS and a restful winter break to all our students and faculty!