

Gender, ethnic/racial minorities' participation in AEJMC: How much and what type of progress?

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Overview

To determine the ethnicity/race and gender of AEJMC leaders, this study analyzes the 2007-2011 annual demo forms submitted to the AEJMC Central Office by divisions, commissions and interest groups. Our research assesses the extent to which AEJMC is meeting its diversity goals in terms of the numeric involvement of people of color and women in leadership roles.

Over the last year, Moody and research assistants at Baylor University have analyzed AEJMC annual demo forms to seek answers to the following research questions: 1) What have been the changes in AEJMC minority members since records have been kept? 2) To the extent that records show, what are the numbers of minorities, by gender, in the top leadership positions of AEJMC, e.g., president, on the Board of Directors representing the various standing committees, as well as heading the various divisions? 3) How many keynote speakers for AEJMC conventions have been persons of color? 4) How many plenary sessions have been dedicated to ethnic/racial issues with invited panelists from such backgrounds? 5) How many research papers have been presented at each division dealing with minority issues?

Top positions of AEJMC Board from 2007-2011

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
President	Charles Self, University Of Oklahoma 	Barbara Hines, Howard University 	Carol J. Pardun, University of South Carolina 	Jan Slater, University of Illinois 	Linda Steiner, University of Maryland 
President Elect	Barbara Hines, Howard University 	Carol J. Pardun, University of South Carolina 	Jan Slater, University of Illinois 	Linda Steiner, University of Maryland 	Kyo Ho Youm, University of Oregon 
Vice President	Carol J. Pardun, Middle Tenn 	Jan Slater, University of Illinois 	Linda Steiner, University of Maryland 	Kyo Ho Youm, University of Oregon 	Paula Poindexter, University of Texas, Austin 
PF&R Com Chair	Don Heider, University Of Maryland 	Pat Washburn, Ohio University 	Barbara Hines, Howard University 	Carol J. Pardun, Middle Tenn 	Kathy Bradshaw, Bowling Green 

Preliminary conclusions: Progress has been made for women; however, minorities tend to lag behind in AEJMC’s leadership positions.

Gender:

- From 2007 to 2011, there were 20 (27%) male board members and 55 female (73%)
- Most of the association’s presidents; four out of five were female. This trend was true of the other top two positions—president-elect and vice president.
- Positions that have only been held by women are ASJMC President-Elect, Executive director, Commission on the Status of Women and Council of Affiliates Chair.
- There are not positions that have been held only by men.

Other highlights:

- From 2007-2011, there were three female and two male keynote session moderators. Similarly, there were three female and two male keynote session speakers.
- Findings were similar for plenary session moderators. Four of six moderators and eight of 14 panelists/speakers were female.

Race/Ethnicity

Table 1: Frequency and percent of AEJMC Board of Directors from 2007-2011

	Freq	%
Anglo male	11	15
Anglo female	51	68
Black/African-American male	4	5.3
Black female	2	2.6
Hispanic/Latino male	2	2.6
Hispanic/Latino female	2	2.6
Asian male	2	2.6
Asian female	0	0
Indian male	1	1.3
Indian female	0	0
	75	100

**Numbers are based on information provided by divisions, commissions and interests groups. Some did not provide race/gender demographics.*

Initial findings

All five presidents were Anglo. The office of vice president was the highest position held by a non-white person. Similarly, Anglos made up the largest percentage of AEJMC division, commission and interest group officers. These statistics will be presented in our final report in September 2012. Race and gender percentages were as follows:

- Anglo/White Males, 15%
- Anglo/White Females, 68%
- Black/African American Males, 5.3%
- Black/African American Females, 2.6%
- Hispanic/Latino Males, 2.6%
- Hispanic/Latino Females, 2.6%

- Asian Males, 2.6%

One reason for concern: According to the 2010 U.S. Census, minorities make up a majority of the U.S. population. Currently, population growth is fastest among minorities as a whole.

U.S. Census Population projections

	2010	2050
Whites (includes "Some other race")	79.5%	74.0%
Non-Hispanic Whites	64.7%	46.3%
Hispanics/Latinos (of any race)	16.0%	30.2%
African Americans	12.9%	13.0%
Asian Americans	4.6%	7.8%

Based on these projections, AEJMC members must envision ways to ensure that its leadership looks more like the general population.

Suggestions:

- Assess how close AEJMC is to reaching its diversity goals.
- Set measurable goals and objectives such as “realizing a two percent increase in overall numbers of people of color in leadership positions.”
- Encourage CSM and MAC to develop awards for divisions, interest groups and commissions that exemplify excellence in diversity
- Encourage MAC and CSM members to join other divisions, interest groups and commissions. Diversity cannot happen unless people of color join other interest groups and attend meetings.
- Maintain mentorship programs. Minorities often feel misplaced and alienated in situations where they are the only person of color. Mentors can help them work through such issues.
- Actively seek funding for Journalism and Mass Communication Leadership Institute for Diversity.
- Create a best practice diversity checklist for divisions, commissions and interest groups. Post it on AEJMC’s website and in each division’s newsletter.
- Reconsider offering mini-plenary sessions. Smaller commissions benefit from priority time slots, advertisement and beverages previously offered by AEJMC.
- Praise rather than punish divisions, commissions and interest groups that are doing a good job
- Consider hiring external diversity consultants to help navigate changes. Commitment from the organization does not necessarily transform members overnight. There may be a backlash effect, particularly from senior members.
- Promote the benefits of a diverse organization
- Maintain current population statistics in comparison to AEJMC demographics

Research goals:

1. Phase one: Assess gender, race/ethnicity make up of AEJMC’s leadership in divisions, interest groups and commissions (i.e. board of directors, officers, moderators and discussants for plenary sessions). Report presented at 2012 board meeting.

2. Phase two: Assess gender, race/ethnicity make up of AEJMC's scholarship/content (i.e. abstracts, paper judges, moderators and discussants). Present report at 2013 annual board meeting.
3. Phase three: Comparison of gender, race/ethnicity make up of AEJMC's leadership with ICA and NCA. Present report at 2012 annual board meeting (in collaboration with Felicia Jones-Ross).