CHANGE YOU CAN BELIEVE IN: 2008 Election Coverage by College Reporters in Missouri—Using Fresh Eyes and New Media Tools

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INTRODUCTION

As they had done in the 2004 and 2006 elections, the student media of Missouri's

Truman State University—known collectively as TMN and comprised of a website, newspaper

(*The Index),* radio station (KTRM—*The Edge*)*,* and TV news program (*News 36*)[1]—set out to

cover the 2008 election with the same enthusiasm that first garnered them regional acclaim and

previous journalism awards.[2] Their coverage was recognized for its dedication to the array of

issues affecting a state in the middle of America's heartland, with both rural and urban concerns

and "red" and "blue" impulses.[3] TMN, advancing both its convergent and "new" media tools,

began its 2008 election coverage with the Iowa Caucus, which witnessed Barack Obama's

transformation from underdog to frontrunner. Thereafter, Obama, now President, was aided by

an army of young voters who infused fresh energy into a timeworn process and helped retool

retail politics using means from blogs to flash video. Truman's reporters gained extraordinary

access to candidates and voters, witnessing shifts in campaign tactics that attempted to match the

new media environment. Election Day proved no different, as a small army of Truman reporters

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[1] Truman media also includes the magazine *Detours,* but as a travel magazine published twice a year, it was not involved in election-year coverage.

[2] *The Index* has won "The Apple" four times in a six-year period ending in 2007, representing the top college journalism award, as sponsored by the Society of Professional Journalists. KTRM won the Missouri Broadcast Educators' Association award for convergent media coverage of the 2004 election and won again for coverage of the 2006 midterm elections.

[3] Missouri's importance to the election was evidence by the continual flow of candidates into the state over the summer and into the post-Labor Day period of intensified campaigning. Obama's visit to St. Louis, where he drew crowds of nearly 100,000, made national news. Equally as interested in the state's endorsement was Governor Sarah Palin, who sparred with Senator Joe Biden at the Vice Presidential debate at Washington University in St. Louis. She also made a late campaign stop in Springfield—a place that some would argue represents the heart of "Missoura"—a shorthand that is often synonymous with the state's more conservative, Southern sensibilities. Finally, on Election Night, CNN acknowledged the state's battleground status, setting up shop in a suburb of St. Louis, with Wolf Blitzer explaining that if this "purple" area of Missouri went Obama's way, so would the national election. When the student reporters finally got back to their hotel room very early Wednesday morning, the only state left on the BBC's page dedicated to a U.S. map detailing election results was Missouri, reflecting no color but a white mass in the middle of America's heartland. It has remained a state representing a post-election, still divided nation. While Iowa continues its "progressive" streak, recently embracing gay marriage rights, in contrast, southern Missouri—the "red zone" where Palin drew enthusiastic crowds—is witnessing a resurgence of the politics of white supremacy and other forms of radical resistance to Obama's agenda.

were dispatched to key locales around Missouri to cover election stories that focused on young, rural, and urban voters across the vital, bellwether state's small "red" towns and "blue" urban centers. What was novel this time around is that these student reporters augmented coverage of campaign events using everything from industry-grade HD cameras to flash cameras and picture phones. As the year moved along, they also concentrated on more offbeat events that focused less on what candidates wanted to say and more on what TMN audiences wanted to hear. They supplemented customary print reports and audio interviews with blogs and call-ins to their home base, which in turn distributed their content to the Truman campus and much of northeast Missouri, along with students at other universities. While mainstream media struggled to keep apace with web-based content being produced by candidates to reach voters—and voters spreading content through new channels that bypassed mainstream media—young reporters spoke the same language as the young operatives newly hired by the campaigns to bridge the communications gap. This paper analyzes the scope and scale of Truman's election coverage from the Iowa Caucus through Election Day, as produced by student reporters working in multimedia teams and deploying a variety of communication tools. Their work exposes how much this past election served as a turning point for both politics in America and the American media charged with keeping a watchful eye over it.

This paper's purpose, as it chronicles the experiences and media experiments of these Missouri-based student reporters, is twofold. First, to augment ongoing discourse about the interactions and co-dependencies between media, political campaigns, and voters. As many writers and researchers have noted, the media's role is no doubt *performative*—helping to construct what it also exists to reflect—but to what degree the media yield influence and/or affect outcomes is far from clear. By offering an analysis of the experiences of Truman's student

media and their election-year coverage, this paper's findings may offer valuable insights into these dynamic processes. This paper's other principal purpose is to look more closely at the fallout from election-year reporting products and processes, including the rapid embrace of new technologies and changing reporting practices, and incorporation of social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. Another shift born of these new options is a continued fusion of storytelling approaches that augment traditional, fact-based reports and opinion pieces with more personal narratives, satirical essays, blogs (print, audio, and video) as interactive content. These new technologies and hybridized approaches helped Obama get elected, due in part to young voters (and newly trained journalists) who maximized the portability and versatility of these new tools. From its newspaper's front page to its Facebook web page, Truman's student journalists reflect the profound sets of changes occurring across professional as well as student media in the wake of election year "experiments."

These shifts are now being exacerbated by the ongoing economic crisis, which is prompting stepped-up efforts to move more rapidly toward more cost-effective media technologies, (web vs. print) as well as to incorporate more user friendly content that adapts to audiences' needs and delivery habits rather than air/publish content in search of audiences. Like most other media organizations, Truman further refined its operational philosophy and expanded its use of multiple technologies/platforms in light of what its reporters and faculty learned on the year-long campaign trail.

As both participants and observers of the above processes, this paper's writers offer their analyses with the intent to contribute to ongoing discourse related to the above issues. The information contained and conveyed in this paper involved several types of research methodologies, including the use of surveys, interviews, anonymous testimonials, and first-

person narratives conducted before and after major reporting events. These materials were then analyzed for identifiable patterns, in relation to specific queries, but also as to how these patterns may have shifted over the course of the students' election-year coverage; and what those shifts might be communicating. In addition, this paper's writers reviewed all news content produced by student media across platforms, comparing their text and tone against planning briefs and expectations as articulated by student media reporters, leaders, and advisers at various intervals throughout the process. Just as student reporters and faculty advisers came together to plan and execute Truman's election-year coverage, they joined forces to conduct the above research and compile part of their findings here.

The paper's principal writer/researcher is Dr. Marilyn Yaquinto, an assistant professor of communication at Truman, and a faculty adviser to student media; she also sits on the student media's governing board and directly advises the television news operations and its related website. She accompanied student reporting teams to Iowa in January and St. Louis in November, as well as to assist student media regarding logistics of their election-year coverage. Finally, Dr. Yaquinto directly supervised the newly launched position of Convergence Coordinator, who served as the chief architect and student media manager for TMN coverage in the wake of the faculty-run Iowa project. As a former reporter before becoming a media/culture scholar, Dr. Yaquinto worked for the *Los Angeles Times* (sharing in its Pulitzer Prize for spot news coverage of the Los Angeles riots in the wake of the Rodney King ordeal). She was assigned to the *Times'* Washington bureau during the 1992 election, before subsequently becoming an editor for a network of community newspapers in the metro Detroit area and becoming a member of the faculty at the University of Michigan's graduate journalism school. This paper's other writers/ researchers are Kyle Magee, who served as the Convergence

Coordinator mentioned above; and Dan Rettke, who is the outgoing Executive Producer of *News 36*, and student leader for TMN teams sent to Iowa and St. Louis. These students were also selected for a nationwide program (two of only 30 students from around the country) to work as assistants to professional media during the Democratic and Republican conventions. Magee was assigned to the Spanish language Univision for both conventions, while Rettke was assigned to CNN for the Democratic convention and Politico for the Republican convention.

THE IOWA PROJECT

Truman's student media had experience on which to draw for its 2008 election-year coverage, having initially designed and implemented several convergent-minded practices for the 2006 midterm election, especially those regarding cross-trained teams working in multimedia formats and reporting from various locations around the state of Missouri. At the time, while many newsrooms and classrooms were just beginning to consider convergence, Truman was aggressively pursuing an ambitious plan for a program its size, in some respects matching and even surpassing the work done by student reporters at the much larger and renowned journalism program at the University of Missouri at Columbia. At Truman, convergence means encouraging student reporters to envision and produce stories in multiple platforms, using technology to augment storytelling rather than to be limited by the dictates of any one medium. As a result, in theory, any one student reporter is capable of researching, reporting, producing, writing/editing (through audio, visual and digital means) material.

For their 2008 election-year coverage, students and faculty advisers began preparations during the Fall semester of 2007. The first major project in the works was the Iowa caucus, which meant transporting student teams just 30 miles north of the Truman campus into Iowa.

Interested students were invited to apply throughout the semester, then evaluated for appropriate skill level and ability to work under pressure. They were also asked to commit to the project's timing, which required them to return to campus on New Year's Eve in order to travel to Iowa the next morning. The selection process also named student leaders who each led a team of three other students (more than 20 students eventually participated). The final plan kept one team on campus to coordinate live radio coverage, another team was positioned at the Des Moines Convention Center alongside major media, with remaining teams crisscrossing Iowa over a two-day period (January 2 and 3) to cover events related to the 10 candidates actively campaigning there. They also reported from inside caucus proceedings that occurred across Iowa the night of January 3. The Democratic candidates at the time, besides President Obama and now Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, included former Senator John Edwards, Senator Chris Dodd, Governor Bill Richardson, Senator (now Vice President) Joe Biden, Senator Dennis Kucinich, and former Senator Mike Gravel; the Republican candidates included former Governor Mike Huckabee, former Governor Mitt Romney, Senator John McCain, Representative Ron Paul, former Mayor Rudy Guiliani, former Senator Fred Thompson, and Representative Duncan Hunter.

Before the teams left any reporting assignment linked to TMN's election-year coverage, they were asked to complete anonymous surveys regarding expectations and interviews were conducted after projects to further flesh out concerns and commentary. Truman's student media operate as independent media, meaning customarily free from prior review. However, as the 2008 election year promised to be a more complicated endeavor, faculty advisers worked directly with student media to help determine content as well as logistical goals. To that end, since Truman's student media are the main source of news for much of northwest Missouri, coverage

that targeted the local/regional marketplace was greatly encouraged.[4] In particular, teams settled

on two main audiences: 1) those in the university community (disproportionately under the age

of 25 and who hail from the major Midwestern urban centers such as St. Louis, Kansas City, and

Chicago, but also from around the U.S. and the world); and 2), those from surrounding rural

communities (who represent a disproportionately older demographic).[5] In light of these

audiences, the student media identified issues they wanted to highlight beforehand, assigning a

subject area and/or candidate to each team during the Fall semester to research in advance,

including the economy, health care, and the Iraq war—with concern for the environment listed as

an issue of interest among Truman's student population's after campus input was solicited.

After Iowa, while evaluating the collected data, researchers (including this paper's

writers and researchers) noted patterns emerge that revealed an aggregation of similar sets of

responses, which could then be articulated as three distinctive "types" of reporter approaches.

This proved crucial as the election year moved forward, as it allowed researchers to track what

traditional practices worked and why, along with assessing what steps toward convergence and

alternative practices were better suited to evolving field conditions and why. Similar to what is

now being experienced among professional media, attitudes about the function of journalism in

political communication, as well as expectations about the integration of changing technologies,

affects both the coverage and the interaction of media with candidates and voters alike. Although

age and experience often are contributing factors, this paper's writers also determined that

journalism instruction and cultural mindsets linked to traditional media practices and products

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[4] Truman is located in Kirksville, Missouri—a town of more than 17,000 residents. The local marketed is supported by an ABC affiliate that has studio operations in Ottumwa, Iowa and Kirksville, as well as a small daily newspaper (*The Kirksville Daily Express*). However, most residents report that the multiple student media outlets provide them with most of their local news.

[5] Given the early January timing, "live" radio coverage was available to the Kirksville community and Truman students, who were not yet back on campus, could access coverage via the TMN website and KTRM, which was audio streaming via the web as well.

were just as crucial to these students' ability to adapt to the intense changes they and professional media experienced in Iowa. It was historic on multiple levels, with the first female candidate for president, the first African American to emerge as a frontrunner, and a crowded media marketplace being challenged by candidates, voters, and changing modes of storytelling.

The first type of expectations and practices coalesced around a student reporter that researchers labeled *careerists.* They dominated (in number and approach) among Truman's student reporters at the time of the Iowa project. They also were disproportionately affiliated with the student newspaper, which like many newspapers has roots dating back a century and representing a medium most steeped in traditional reporting rituals and practices. Despite recent changes to Truman's journalism curriculum and an increased focus on multimedia convergence, the *careerists* were primarily concerned with emulating professional media practitioners, especially those in print. Given that approach, their expectations and related evaluations (post-Iowa and beyond) revealed a significant level of frustration with changes being experienced in the field as a result of intense competition and/or evolving technologies and reporting practices.

The next type consisted of *idealists*, who often identified themselves as non-journalism majors who wanted to adhere to critical thinking models learned from studying a variety of disciplines within Truman's liberal arts programs.[6] Unlike the *careerists,* the *idealists* viewed themselves as surrogates for their Missouri audiences, considering themselves advocates performing a "watchdog" function that they deemed necessary for ensuring a fair and transparent election process. Approaching their roles as representing the "fourth estate," *idealists* maintained their professional mission as one that should interrogate power, regardless of political affiliation.

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[6] Truman is a highly selective liberal arts university with an enrollment just under 6,000 and consistently ranked as one of the top colleges in the Midwest by *U.S. News & World Report.*

The final type was best exemplified by students called ***alternalists***, meaning that they mix alternative methods with more traditional reporting products and practices. They are committed to rhetoric and behaviors that are traceable to political organizing methodologies, but also to tech-driven, web-based social networking practices (i.e., blogging, file-sharing). These technologies help *alternalists* maintain links to phenomena outside the classroom and newsroom, and ultimately represent a type of "outlaw" journalism that looks to grass-roots movements for inspiration. They expressed a desire to disrupt the orchestrated "dance" that they saw routinely occurring between major candidates and the mainstream media. At the outset of the process, especially in Iowa, they numbered just a few. But they increased in number and emerged as the pioneers who embraced change and new tools and approaches.

Researchers also found a degree of slippage between types, especially under duress, with the latter types adjusting behaviors to perform as *careerists* when competing directly with other reporters or dealing with intense deadline pressures. However, as time went on, rather than the election convincing *alternalists* to "professionalize" themselves and become more like the *careerists,* from Iowa forward, the *careerists* (among our students as well as within traditional media and political campaigns) increasingly became "infected" with the products and practices advanced by *alternalists*—a phenomenon that occurred at CNN as well as TMN.

As all three types were dispatched at university expense (and vans) to gain first-hand knowledge of how media practitioners report on voter behavior, interact with candidates/campaigns, engage the political process, and implement emerging media approaches, their experiences offer valuable testimonies that have much to teach those who design such programs, as well as those who consider these programs training grounds for professional employment. As such, these student assessments are instructional in providing media scholars

and practitioners alike with insights not only about how communication and political processes intersect, but also how theory may differ from practice.

What Iowa revealed about politics and media processes

Iowa has long been considered an important harbinger of presidential aspirations and performances. But the 2008 Iowa caucus, more so than in previous elections, promised to be a vigorous staging area for many candidates to introduce new ground games and to position themselves in accordance with or *counter to* expectations regarding their electability come November. Having moved the caucus date from January 14 to January 3 already testified to the volatility of this election, with states and candidates maneuvering for frontrunner status more aggressively than in previous years and to accommodate a long list of viable candidates. Such candidate density was matched by media presence, with more than 2,400 journalists from around the world in Iowa, nearly doubling the amount of media attention at the last presidential caucus.[7]

Iowa has proven pivotal for many candidates over the years, moving some from challenger to frontrunner status, or dampening the hopes of otherwise strong candidates after wins were deemed too slim to match expectations, arguably affecting subsequent contests.[8] One striking example is the fate of Governor Howard Dean, whose Iowa speech after his third-place finish—a supposed tirade now known as the "Dean Scream"—looped so regularly on broadcast media that it is often cited as essentially helping to end Dean's run for the White House. The 2008 Iowa Caucus has produced a few unexpected results, among them, to reverse the expected coronation of Senator Hillary Clinton as the presumptive Democratic frontrunner (she placed

[7] Information from press conference with press secretary for Iowa governor Chet Culver, 2 January 2008.
[8] Journalists, political observers, and scholars alike have written exhaustively about this issue, often framed as the question: why Iowa? See Dan Balz, "Balancing Act: Iowa, N.H. vs. the Critics," *Washington Post*, 28 December 2005, available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/12/27/AR2005122700902.html>. Also see Christopher Hull, *Grassroots Rules: How the Iowa Caucus Helps Elect American Presidents*, Stanford Law Books, Stanford University Press, 2007.

third) in favor of political newcomer Senator Barack Obama, who won the predominately white state—the first African American candidate to do so. Some have argued that Obama was in part aided by media frames that low-balled expectations beforehand, which then stood in stark contrast after his victory, making it look more extraordinary in hindsight. Some argue that Obama's Iowa win—framed as a stunning surprise—helped catapult him into a starring role ever after. Conversely, high expectations can frame a candidate's "win," if by too narrow a margin, as nearly synonymous with a loss compared to pre-election buzz. The point is not only that the actual results from Iowa can make or break a candidate's chances in subsequent contests, but also the way media frame a candidate before and after caucus night can profoundly impact perceptions about that candidate—win or lose. Key linkages between media coverage and the fates of some candidates who competed in the 2008 Iowa Caucus can be heard in the student testimonies below.

Among Truman reporters, the *careerists* expressed both enthusiasm and anxiety about taking their place amid the crush of media reportedly already camped out in Iowa for months. They were there to accompany those candidates who best understood the impact of the state's role in creating "first impressions," which went beyond state politics to kick off the national election, helping to establish both the pitch of campaign rhetoric and the pecking order among candidates, which the remainder of the election calendar would affirm and/or contest. Most of the dominant *careerists* listed a primary motive for participating in the Iowa project as a desire to hone their reporting skills through first-hand "field" experience. Others said they hoped to learn more about the political process. For *careerists*, "experience" meant maintaining their "objectivity" while in the field. This privileging of "objectivity" as a goal, once described by sociologist Gaye Tuchman as a "strategic ritual," endures as a philosophy, but which one top-

selling journalism textbook described as an approach "that conceals a multitude of professional sins while producing superficial and often misleading coverage."[9] An adherence to objectivity, as currently practiced by the major media, often translates into replicating the careful staging of, in particular, political candidates and events. Many reporters merely relay this stagecraft to audiences, finding themselves "staring at the light" created by composed events that lure the eye (and the camera lens) to simply push record and do little else to interrogate such presentations. Such a reverence for "objectively" reporting what has been pre-packaged for them is a criticism levied at the news media at large, not at Truman's student media in particular. Given their track record of recognized excellence among their peers, the observations of Truman reporters about mainstream media and their well-choreographed duets with presidential candidates are credible and, in many respects, disturbing, considering some expressed a desire to emulate what they saw, while others expressed dismay with what they witnessed. Tensions discernible in their evaluations of Iowa can also be found among professional journalists, who also question the media's role in the political process there—a vital query in which the stakes remain high.

Post-Iowa evaluations and observations

Among *careerists*, many of their responses voiced a similar refrain that described the Iowa project as "the most amazing experience ... the energy, excitement, chaos," especially for being able to talk to "people who are arguably more important than you are." Others, though, described the ordeal as being "far more difficult than … expected," "some people were tested to the limit," or "the flow of info was not in our control." The *careerists*, who initially viewed Iowa as a warm-up for their futures as media professionals, often complained the most about how technology had failed them, or how their limited access to major candidates was due to having

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[9] Brian S. Brooks, George Kennedy, Daryl R. Moen, Don Ranly, *News Reporting and Writing,* Ninth Edition, The Missouri Group, Bedford/St. Martins, 2008.

lesser credentials as student media. Despite having industry-grade equipment capable of

recording high-quality video and audio,[10] *careerists* expressed a sort of equipment envy, often

blaming reporting difficulties on the lack of appropriate delivery channels, as in not having "cell

phones that work as wireless routers" in the absence of a satellite truck such as those owned by

major media and parked outside the convention center.[11]

As many of the Truman reporters themselves had predicted, they were better able to

approach lesser candidates such as Richardson and Dodd, who were more readily available for

interviews. One Truman reporter recalled: "Access to … Dodd was a lot easier … He had a press

conference … and we were really close to him … but access to … others [was] fairly difficult."

This type of access also in part accounts for these candidates' being overrepresented in Truman's

Iowa coverage. However, rather than take full advantage of access to any candidate for president

available to them in Iowa—still a valid learning opportunity—the *careerists* often displayed the

same level of disdain that the major media practiced with respect to second- or third-tier

candidates. The Truman student positioned at the convention center, after watching how

candidates such as Richardson, Dodd, and Biden regularly made appearances there (most likely

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[10] In preparing video packages and online footage updates, TMN teams utilized Canon XLR 2 video-cameras capable of recording high-quality video on multiple channels with automatic and manual zoom, corrective white balance, and color correction. The camera packs include XLR cables plugged into hand-held microphones with TMN mic-flags. They also used mini DV tapes to record footage, which was uploaded through JVC BR-DV3000 Mini DV decks; this process copies footage into Avid XPress Pro 4.6 editing equipment. Given time constraints, to also edit footage, teams used iMovie for Mac compatibility as well. When recording live audio and pre-recorded interviews, teams relied on Marantz Professional Solid State Recorder PMD660 with accompanying USB and sim cards for audio storage, XLR cords, and microphones. For existing audio, teams uploaded their work into Adobe Audition 1.0 to make necessary edits.

[11] Some difficulties relating to equipment or a lack of proficiency in using some of the professional-level technology was rooted in the varying degrees of training among some TMN reporters, as first-year students and sophomores had yet to take advanced production courses, which more regularly utilize such state-of-the-art technology. For those students who had received little training on field equipment outside of two Sundays worth of lessons in basic camera operations and audio recording, they were more likely to express a degree of "failure" with respect to using these journalism tools. The level of techno-phobia was also exacerbated by the speed of events and the heated competition among media practitioners at live events for available plugs along with the intense jockeying for positions nearest the candidates. Moreover, while at events, TMN reporters witnessed equipment failure that affected mainstream reporters, who resorted to pen and paper when necessary and carried on with the reporting process

hoping to ensure coverage by coming *to* the media hub), recalled how his Truman team waited in line (behind NBC's Tim Russert) to interview Iowa's former governor Tom Vilsack. As Missouri's neighboring governor, this reporter had rightly concluded that he would be of greater interest to Truman's audiences. Overall, *careerists* evaluated their level of success in relation to how best they had imitated the professional media, which for them meant competing for a close-up of a frontrunner or to place a microphone as close as CNN's. Moreover, in responses, *careerists* were more likely to admit to having strayed from Truman's proposed coverage focus on students and rural voters, finding themselves similarly chasing candidates across Iowa and following the major media pack. So intent at coming as close as possible to candidates at various campaign events—even when confined to a perimeter position—they often failed to engage regular Iowans who might be standing next to them and who would perhaps better interest Truman's hometown audiences. Many *careerists* noted in their surveys how, when faced with being marginalized by campaign handlers or pushed aside by major media, they were forced to fall back on whatever "journalistic instincts" they had cultivated to still report the "news" in as timely a manner as possible. What appeared to be "newsworthy" to them, however, was often whatever was produced by the major media. Still, to their credit, many Truman reporters, regardless of type, generally adhered to minimal standards of responsible journalism, including the pursuit of multiple sources and the need to double-check facts and quotes.

Before going to Iowa, and in contrast to *careerists*' worries over "getting the story," *idealists* had expressed concerns about being unprepared, especially with respect to their knowledge about the issues and sufficient familiarity with how the caucus process operates. Some *idealists* expressed as a goal before leaving for Iowa to not lose sight of maintaining that critical perspective along with delivering more focused news coverage; they also hoped to study

first-hand the relationships between political camps and the media—even to ask: "who has control of campaign messaging?" In their post-Iowa reflections, *idealists* frequently revealed their level of dissatisfaction after witnessing how effectively campaigns were able to package candidates, along with the media's failure to pursue more "authentic" information. One *idealist* explained: "After seeing a lot of speeches it becomes real clear what is canned and what is more heartfelt," an insight left out of most media coverage. In this manner, *idealists* also expressed frustration over the major media's tendency to "decontextualize" events and collapse details, in light of their repetitive orientations and cookie-cutter frames, thereby helping to extinguish differentiations that Truman reporters noticed in campaign cultures. As one *idealist* mentioned in regard to the Huckabee coverage, while the campaign event had the feel of "preacher … at a church pot luck," the media's candidate-at-podium approach (flanked by flags, followers, and, in this case, Mrs. Huckabee) de-emphasized such impressions, probably to remain "objective," surmised this *idealist*. Moreover, unlike *careerists*' frustration with being marginalized by the mainstream media, *idealists* were more likely to complain about the mainstream media's marginalization of lesser candidates. *Idealists* often expressed enthusiasm rather than disdain for lesser candidates—not in the manner of a partisan—but for the purpose of keeping such "voices" in play. One *idealist* lamented how mainstream media coverage "buries the smaller candidates and people go with the larger [candidates] because … they have more press coverage so people approve them even if a smaller candidate fits their needs better." Another offered: "I sometimes wanted to 'cheerlead' for lesser candidates and point out flaws in the frontrunner, but didn't." Given *idealists*' disdain for "pack" journalism, their post-Iowa complaints often focused on how these ideals were compromised when faced with the media crush at campaign events. They reported that under pressure, they often slipped into what researchers here have identified as a

careerist mode. As one *idealist* commented, "We were reporting whatever we could and I found that I would have liked to ask better questions." Faced with deadlines and intense competition, *idealists* resorted to "pack" tendencies. *Idealists* reported finding themselves similarly scrambling to set up equipment alongside other media to capture a candidate's familiar stump speech. They also recalled how this type of coverage came at the expense of including more citizen-sponsored events, where *idealists* thought they would be better able to focus attention on regular Iowans, particularly young and rural voters, in keeping with their mission.

In planning meetings prior to the Iowa trip, one team leader and *idealist* recalled that only two of the six student leaders, however, had fully articulated the need to pursue issues rather than candidates. This *idealist* noted that this philosophical tension then "played itself out in Iowa," with candidate-centered stories dominating Truman's coverage. *Idealists* expressed particular frustration with how they themselves were seduced into replicating the major media's "group think." One *idealist* relayed in detail such a scenario involving a Clinton rally in Iowa City. The Truman team had arrived ahead of the media bus that accompanies Clinton, as did Clinton herself. Not waiting for these mainstream reporters, upon arriving at the venue, Clinton began her speech, causing most of the major networks to miss her opening remarks. The Truman team, however, had successfully captured these initial comments, in which Clinton had delivered her "freshest" remarks. Reporters from both CNN and CBS then approached the Truman team, asking for a copy of the missed segment for use in their national coverage. For student journalists, such attention from top-level reporters was a prize in itself, as it validated student efforts and reinforced the idea that Truman's focus was on target. Upon reflection, this *idealist* recalled how easily she could be distracted from her original purpose once working in such close proximity with major media.

As a former reporter, Dr. Yaquinto could attest to how difficult it was to resist "looking at the light," often joining the pack rather than pursuing the road less traveled. As an adviser in Iowa—trying to interfere as little as possible, considering the autonomy of Truman's student media—she was eager to respond if a student asked for advice. Once solicited, she attempted to redirect or "correct" such mimetic tendencies. One example occurred at an Obama rally near the University of Iowa. After watching one of her team members use up a considerable amount of videotape shooting Obama's already well-heeled stump speech, while another diligently recorded the same talking points on an audio recorder, Dr. Yaquinto urged them both to perhaps refocus their attention on students who were standing at the back of the auditorium and who might be available for interviews. She also pointed out to her team an older woman who had raised her hand in response to Obama's question about who remained "undecided" among the dense crowd of listeners.

Another close-up Dr. Yaquinto witnessed involved her team's reporting efforts involving Huckabee at an event in Grinnell—the only event he scheduled in Iowa on caucus day. After the event ended and Huckabee had climbed back on his bus, most of the media followed suit, having shot sufficient footage of his stump speech. The Truman reporters, however, stayed behind to approach some of his supporters, who were still mingling about and who the mainstream media had forsaken. Not waiting to be asked, two elderly women approached the Truman team, asking the student reporters if they wanted to interview them—the pair introducing themselves as Iowa farmers. Absent the candidate and the competition from other media, the Truman team conducted in-depth and revealing interviews with these Iowans. One of the women identified herself as a long-time Huckabee supporter, while the other said she had just made up her mind to support him the night before. Tellingly, she did not make the decision in conjunction with

Huckabee's in-person appearance, but after watching Huckabee on *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* the night before.

Despite being left off the official media bus or other designated means for transporting mainstream reporters traveling with candidates, Truman reporters occasionally arrived at events ahead of the pack. Truman photographers, in particular, although assisting in other types of reporting tasks, had brought along their own cameras to supplement the university's and produced some of Truman's best work—in some cases, as some of their photos were bought by major media that missed these events. Regardless of type or journalistic role, the coverage area in which Truman reporters were able to produce some measure of original work and operate largely on their own involved coverage of the caucuses themselves. Again, without candidates demanding their attention and few other reporters at every individual site given the number of them (related to Iowa's 1,997 precincts), Truman crews were able to focus on regular Iowans, along with chronicling the transparent features of a caucus.[12]

More importantly, the Iowa experience proved prophetic about what the rest of the election would yield. Considering TMN reporters were trying to focus some of their coverage on what other college students were experiencing, they often asked about the timing of the Iowa caucus and its effects of young voter turnout. Given the earlier caucus date, some claimed that the youth vote was being disenfranchised because university students who had registered to vote in college towns were not being able to participate, as so many of them were still home on

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[12] One case particularly highlights this feature of a caucus, and involves one held in a private home with approximately 90 people participating. There, students observed and recorded negotiations occurring within one family—a private conversation amid the public sphere—the very essence of a Iowa-style process. The family consisted of a middle-aged couple and an elderly woman who was a mother to one of them. On the first go-around to determine candidate viability, the family had declared themselves "undecided." During the second phase of the process, appeals were made to bring the family into one of the candidates declared to be viable. The couple made their move, joining the Edwards camp and assuming their mother would join them. However, she then announced her support for Obama, surprising her relatives but providing analysts with another example of the candidate's ability to draw supporters from a variety of constituencies—a trend that has held up throughout subsequent contests.

holiday break.[13] Student reporters also interacted with college-age campaign staffers, impressed that people their own age were so actively involved in campaigns, especially for Ron Paul and Obama. During a caucus event at Grinnell College, which Dr. Yaquinto personally observed, how events unfolded during the actual counting of bodies could also be considered prophetic regarding how these campaigns conducted themselves through the rest of the process. In other words, campaign personalities and functioning were already apparent in Iowa. The Iowa process allows for incredible transparency, as caucusers must openly align themselves with a candidate then face pressure and attempts at persuasion from fellow Iowans, if their candidate does not prove viable and they are urged to go stand with more numerous supporters of other candidates that produced sufficient support after the first literal "head" count. These proceedings also made transparent the inner workings of campaign as well as the intensity of support and level of dysfunction. Many of these tendencies held true, in some cases, until Election Day. For example, in Iowa, caucusers for Obama were organized, steadfast, and well-versed in the campaign's messages, owing to the fact, as they explained it, that they were co-creators of those messages. In contrast, among caucusers for Clinton, especially those working directly for her campaign, when she failed get the requisite support on the first count (at least at the caucus proceedings Dr. Yaquinto observed), rather than immediately react to events and try methods to garner more support before the second count, her operative had to phone or text handlers up the food chain of the campaign, which would then dispatch orders as to how to proceed.

Among the most useful information for researchers is what these students witnessed and later articulated about campaign cultures. While *careerists* reluctantly relayed such observations (resisting such a "subjective" exercise), *idealists* were eager to share what they had observed.

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[13] See, for example, Meredith Decker, "Iowa Caucus Ruckus," *The Nation,* 13 December 2007; available at<http://www.thenation.com/doc/20071231/iowa>.

Tellingly, no matter the type, their observations about certain campaigns echoed each other. For example, *careerists* and *idealists* alike described Obama staffers and supporters as "organically excited," "confident," and "friendly." And, they said covering Obama events, given his ability to draw overflowing crowds who treated him "like a rock star," were exciting to cover. Supporters at Edwards events were not as "frenzied" as Obama's but deemed sufficiently "enthusiastic." Edwards seemed likeable, they recalled, whereas Romney came off as "plastic" and "insincere," and his supporters "sparse" and the staging of his events "contrived." (Dr. Yaquinto's team reported on his stop at an airplane hangar at the Cedar Rapids airport, where he was flanked by white Lear jets and few onlookers outside of the media traveling with him.) Huckabee was described by those Truman reporters who encountered him as "authentic" and "charismatic." His supporters, though, were thought to be "bored" and distracted during the candidate's remarks about the economy, but "came alive" when he brought up issues related to religion or moral values. The most complaints could be tracked about the Clinton campaign, as her staffers were deemed "rude" and nervous, as well as disorganized about schedule changes—often waiting until the last minute to provide the media with the day's planned events, making it difficult to dispatch reporters if they were not among those traveling exclusively with her. Moreover, Truman reporters noted that supporters often expressed a desire to see Bill Clinton as much as her; he did make several appearances in Iowa during the days leading up to the caucus, adding to the expectation. These observations, again, proved to be prophetic and decisive, although anecdotal, revealed trends and campaign weaknesses that became more magnified as the year went on.

And despite these subtle and apparent differences, *idealists* complained that the networks and cable news shows, which Truman reporters tracked, framed the sparsely attended Romney stop and Obama's filled-to-capacity stump events nearly identically. Rather than objective, they

saw this as a huge failure among traditional media coverage—that the discrepancy between what was framed on TV and what had been experienced in person *was* relevant. Such staging and media framing, speculated the *idealists,* was done for ease of production and to appear "objective," but which actually presented inaccurate portraits and created false impressions.

One *idealist* who had witnessed first-hand events for Edwards, Clinton, Obama, Dodd, Richardson, and Romney, remarked how the national media frequently failed to contextualize events or accurately relay notable differences. This student reporter said she could see poignant variations that Iowans too noted in interviews, but which were omitted when coverage was broadcast to the rest of the nation. Another *idealist* shared a similar sentiment after she witnessed a CNN correspondent work an Edwards event. The student recalled how the CNN reporter stood on a media riser with his back to the podium, waiting for nearly 20 minutes for Edwards to enter the room. He made no effort to take in details about the venue or talk with supporters or curious Iowans. Once Edwards entered the room and walked to the podium, however, the student recalled that the CNN correspondent recorded his pre-rehearsed stand-up then quickly exited the venue. Rather than a commitment to objectivity, CNN's approach seemed to this student more about suiting the demands for brevity rather than the complex needs of voters and viewers. Despite unlimited access to candidates such as Edwards, and a 24-hour broadcast window, CNN too chose expediency over expansiveness, in her opinion.

Another team of students recalled their experiences watching the major media's "get in, get out" approach. These student reporters had entered a food court inside a shopping mall to conduct several audio interviews with diners; these Iowans expressed how tired they were of being bombarded by candidates and the media, but graciously agreed to talk with the TMN team. The three interviewees reported receiving nearly 15 pieces of candidate-related mail a day and at

least six calls a night from campaigns in the three weeks leading up to caucus day. More importantly, as the students packed up to leave, a woman approached them if they were staying for an event about to occur involving Obama and his wife Michelle. Soon the media bus arrived and professional reporters started filling up the food court. Moreover, as they began setting up their equipment, they shoved aside several diners, restaurant employees, along with the Truman crew in order to secure their proximity to the Obamas. The Truman reporter explained how the Obamas ordered Subway sandwiches they never ate, posing with some diners and waving at others, before they too quickly exited the venue.

An alternative project: an insider's view

After observing how Truman reporting teams were approaching their election coverage, one Truman student—steeped in New Media tools and not yet inculcated in traditional newsroom practices—opted to travel independently to Iowa ahead of the Truman crews and prosecute an alternative approach to caucus coverage. What researchers describe as an *alternalist* (as delineated above), this journalist used a variety of reporting methods, from blogs to podcasts. More importantly, she placed herself as an insider within the McCain campaign, straddling a sensitive line between journalist and campaign staffer. She recalled how she fully disclosed her project to McCain staffers and explained why she wanted to be an "embedded" journalist, and not be relegated to the media section of the campaign bus, so to speak. She described their reaction at first skeptical, even suspicious, thinking her a spy for other candidates, but eventually accepting her presence, often enlisting her media-related skills. Importantly, in her view, her perspective yielded a more close-up view and a better understanding of how campaigns work. Rather than the pretense of objectivity, she explored the edges of a subjective perspective, and stretched the word journalist as far as it could go. A freelance journalist, with whom the

alternalist collaborated in Iowa, also noted difficulties embedded in her experiment, explaining, "[Her] natural leadership skills got in the way. She contributed greatly to the campaign and lost some of the story—but also picked up a storyline nobody else had."[14]

Like the Truman teams, the *alternalist* too recalled examples of media practices that revealed how some reporters were attempting to find new stories in the middle of such well-worn turf. She recalled an exchange between members of the Paul and Huckabee organizations involving reporters from a local ABC affiliate. After Paul supporters had assembled in front of their cameras, the local ABC reporters asked the Paul supporters to move across the street. However, they soon decided to do a story on the contrasting types of supporters for each campaign, eventually framing the Paul supporters as brash and aggressive as compared to Huckabee's more conservative followers. Also similar to the Truman reporters' encounters with the Clinton campaign, this *alternalist*, having ventured out to attend other candidates' events, was set to cover Clinton's supposed New Year's Eve kiss with Bill. But after Clinton staffers noted the lack of attendance, they canceled the event, leaving what supporters had gathered angry at the change in plans.

This *alternalist* also noted "how essential the media [are] to this process," and considered her approach—despite its pitfalls and "insider" role—better able to resist simply covering McCain only in relation to other candidates, as in the horse race match-ups favored by the major media. She believed that she had more time to familiarize herself with the candidate and observe the personality of his campaign, as well as to better utilize ways to more openly report these observations. She deployed a variety of delivery modes, which she thought produced deeper insights and more comprehensive storytelling. In her view, she was providing coverage that voters could use more than polling data.

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[14] E-mailed comments from Codon to this paper's author, 7 January 2008.

She also was able to convey another revealing detail that would be revelatory about McCain, and his failure to connect with young voters or those looking for fresh policy stances. She had described his campaign staff as wary not only of young people or newcomers to their campaign, but also of those who merely enlisted "young" technologies. She described them as fearful of tools like Blackberries, fretting over the loss of message control, and viewing such devices as nearly "spy ware." In stark contrast were the Obama staffers who communicated with reporters and supporters alike using a variety of new technologies and web-based communications such as extensive use of Facebook. Obama himself would become famous for his Blackberry, whose reluctance to part with it for security reasons once president, prompted the invention of the first-ever "super-encrypted" one for use by an American president.

Another realm of helpful insights from students were their responses to the question: *Do you think the media "contributes" to the political process, "complicates" the political process, or accurately "communicates" how the political process in Iowa works?"* Below are some of their answers, which are as complex as they are contradictory, perhaps echoing tensions in others—whether scholars, politicians, or ordinary Americans—all of who may question the media's role in elections, and worry about fallout if too many of us simply stare into the light.

- "We were all documenting a part of history and presenting to people who couldn't be in Iowa … our piece of the experience. I noticed, however, when we were putting video packages together, that we made our own assessments as to what was good and what wasn't worthy of broadcasting (as far as the candidate's speeches were concerned). I think the media only cover a fraction of what the candidate's supporters get to experience, which is part of the reason the media can't be 100 percent reliable."
- "We decide what's critical for our audiences to hear."

- "I realized that without the press coverage and media being there, the candidates would not be as successful."

- "I think [media coverage] does a little of each. It contributes in the way that it helps get candidates' ideas out to the public; it complicates in the way that it makes preliminary processes such as the Iowa caucuses a bigger deal than they need to be; it communicates in the way that it helps increase voter turnout by stressing the importance of politics."

- "Media, in lots of cases, [don't] just contribute but [are] the political process."

THE MISSOURI PRIMARY: FURTHER EXPERIMENTS IN CONVERGENCE

The above reactions and observations related to the Iowa Caucus helped TMN retool its approach and coverage goals for the next major election event: the Missouri primary. In the weeks prior to the so-called Super Tuesday event, plans were made to find coverage in St. Louis that would locate students in this urban setting to contrast with the rural perspective of students and local townspeople near Truman's campus. Of the students who participated in the trip—the majority had been classified as *idealists,* which also influenced their approach, as they reported wanting to improve their performances post-Iowa and better plan alternative coverage to what the mainstream media carried. Although TMN reporters focused on youth-centered events, their interaction with local media proved the more interesting aspect of their experiences. In contrast to Iowa, students who traveled to St. Louis to cover primary-related events were again not viewed as professionals but this time as subjects of coverage: examples of the youth vote and valued Missouri constituents. At a "Kids for Obama" rally, the student journalist covering the event said that while reporting the event and emphasizing how it conveyed the youthful

personality of the Obama campaign, she in turn was interviewed as a young voter by reporters from the local NBC affiliate.

More than anything, Truman's approach to the 2008 Missouri Primary represented a more aggressive application of convergent techniques, including the participation of fewer reporters and a focus on multiple perspectives from fewer events, as opposed to a quantity of stories from multiple events (which then fosters a standardization that flattens out narrative subtleties). As Coordinator, Magee determined that the primary coverage would entail a watered-down version of the Iowa master plan to ensure better flow and more diversity of journalistic voices and multimedia skill sets. Rather than try to replicate mainstream media content, as often happened in Iowa, Truman reporters aimed at creating distinctive content, but with a renewed commitment to their focus on student, rural and urban voter issues. Moreover, rather than foster a model of "competition" with other universities' media, Magee reached out to foster a collaborative spirit, particularly with Washington University media—an alliance that proved crucial for participating in key events later in the election cycle.

The leaner team of student reporters sent out to cover primary-related events had experience across formats and a range of technical skills.[15] Magee outfitted each team with equipment that would be flexible enough for field work, making sure each team member had the capability to send back print, video, audio, blog and photographic materials in a timely fashion. Each piece was then reviewed and edited before being launched onto the TMN website. Two laptops, geared up with Adobe Audition and Avid Xpress Pro, were the main portable work

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[15] Other equipment requirements for the field reporters included familiarity with Adobe Audition (versions 1.0 and 2.0), Avid Xpress Pro (version 4.6), Gen CG (version 4.6), while demonstrating proficiency in handling pieces of field equipment including Canon XL and CL2 cameras, Marantz Professional Solid State Recorder PMD660 audio recording devices with complementary USB and sim card storage, two D75 Digital Audio Consoles), a JK Digital Hybrid, an R55E Audio Production Board and a Ross Synergy TV Switcher, in addition to the traditional print-dedicated technologies.

stations. In addition, each student brought along a personal voice recorder and still camera, while making use of university-issued Marantz decks (as audio recorders). Additionally, several students brought personal laptops as well to compile blogs and edit stories/photos for quick submission.[16] Individual student-journalists were required to compile at least three original pieces while in the field for use on the TMN website. Ultimately, the project represented a turn towards a multimedia-based model, marrying traditional formats with web-based alternative content such as Twitter, Facebook and MySpace—capable of reaching out to more tech-savvy audiences. Ultimately, the team produced multimedia coverage that included in-depth print narratives accompanied by photo galleries and video packages featuring stand-ups around campus, as well as interviews with St. Louis residents featuring audio and blog reports.[17]

Some of the pitfalls included the technical problems associated with shipping video back to the home-base, and partially edited content using iMovie and Windows Movie Maker, but which were not compatible with Avid Xpress Pro back at home-base. These videos had to be re-edited and posted onto the website the day after the primary. Moreover, team members dispatched by Truman's newspaper began to get pressured to produce traditional content. In some cases, as time wore on, some of these print reporters lost track of the team's common goals and fell back into writing medium-dedicated copy and forsaking other media components. Finally, some began working in isolation, rather than adhere to the more holistic approach originally planned, trying to replicate the "backpack" model, but which proves more problematic than fruitful. The chief

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[16] The team was also equipped with camera packs that included each of the following pieces: XLR connector mic plug-ins, TMN mic-flags and Canon XL2 cameras. The materials were recorded on mini DV tapes and uploaded into Avid Xpress Pro using JVC BR-DV3000 Mini DV decks.

[17] The biggest problems faced during the actual coverage process turned out to be technological hampering involving the dysfunctional elements of the laptop-based programs. As a result, the students were not able to send back any video-based coverage until returning to campus the next day. Given the frequency and ease of print, blog, photo and audio-based coverage, such materials were sent back to campus in a timely fashion and edited efficiently for use on the TMN website that same evening.

problem with this type of solitary multitasking is that it often result in fragmented content trying

to incorporate technology for style's sake rather than to contribute to a coherent storytelling

focus. Subsequent surveys and interviews, though, revealed how most members of the team

covering the primary appreciated the "experiment" and overall experience, having interacted

with prominent politicians, grassroots organizations, and ordinary voters who represented diverse

communities from in and around St. Louis. They were also grateful for the opportunity to record

their observations about other young people through multiple formats. Rather than suppress their

impressions and dismiss their eyewitness accounts, they funneled them through video blogging,

tweets (via Twitter), and Facebook's "wall" posts, in addition to more traditional news stories.

They appreciated being able to act as participants in the process as well as reporters, but careful

to avoid slipping into partisanship, which remains impermissible in new and old forms of

journalism. They concluded that traditional journalists were no more objective, channeling what

campaigns carefully packaged and lending support to frontrunners at the expense of lesser

candidates. These *idealists* and *alternalists* reported having tried to provide unbiased information

as fairly as possible, but also interrupting the status quo by looking for fresh stories from those

who are rarely are given a media voice; that included local community activists, small-town

politicians looking to make a difference on a state-wide level, and students hungry for fresh

content, even satire (as in *The Daily Show*) that often, in their view, does a better job of exposing

falsehoods and hypocrisy that a lot of content produced by professional journalists.

In the end, the Missouri Primary team reported implementing a host of subtle changes to

TMN's election coverage, adding new tools to supplement but not replace much of what their

classroom educations and on-the-job training had taught them. Rather, many of them said they

viewed the Primary project as a stepping-stone toward the more complex undertaking that lay

ahead. For the next six months, the Coordinator worked to devising solutions for problems that had plagued field reporters and home-base managers in these past project outlined above, as well as to anticipate the array of technical and logistical issues that no doubt would emerge during TMN's plan for Election Day coverage come November.

THE GENERAL ELECTION: CONVERGENCE AT A CROSSROADS

Representing the most ambitious convergence project the Truman Media Network had tackled to date, the 2008 Election Day plan promised to test all claims to prior experience and many participants' commitment to further experiments with convergence. Election Day coverage took more than six months to plan, as it ultimately spanned nearly 24 hours of activity and involved more than 40 reporters working in teams out in the field.

Reporters were divided among color-coded teams that correlated to intended destinations: the "red" team worked in St. Louis, the "white" dedicated to the region encompassing the state capital of Jefferson City and the mid-Missouri hub of Columbia, the "blue" team worked out of the TMN News Center, and the "purple" team covered events around Kirksville and on campus (hence, utilizing the university's familiar purple). Members of teams were trained together and put through a series of team-building exercises and field "tests," which put them in pressure situations to tax their level of coordination, interactivity, and collective skills while producing "live" content for "dry-run" operations. These rehearsals involved actual events, including the 2008 Adair County Healthcare Forum, the 2008 Missouri Senate Ninth District Debate (held on campus), and the 2008 Adair County Government Candidates Forum. During these rehearsals, each team leader facilitated the completion of three stories, which were then reviewed and edited by home-based teams before being uploaded to the TMN website. Once these practice projects

were completed, teams also called into the KTRM News Director's Sunday news show to participate in live interviews. Each team had a designated 15-minute time slot to call in from a specific location around Kirksville to report its stories—each requiring the industry's highest standard of three sources. These projects were recorded and reviewed during meetings to review what had worked (or not) ahead of the live call-ins scheduled for Election Day.

For the first time, teams included a dedicated blogger (in text and video/audio formats), who could provide behind-the-scenes accounts and color commentary not normally included in news reports. These blogs relayed team experiences and impressions about process and candidates that captured more than the routine facts of a news event—content often duplicated across competing media. Rather, the TMN bloggers were able to highlight thematic elements that did not fit into traditional news stories but provided a fresh approach for sharing observations. It also invited a wider audience to tune in. (Since Election Day, such blogs and Twitter have become part of the everyday reporting tools of mainstream media). Bloggers also received training in what would be considered fair commentary and observation, and to avoid indulging in partisan plugs and endorsements. Magee also instituted a disclaimer (with Dr. Yaquinto's assistance) that warned audiences that this new mode of expression was distinctive from traditional reporting but no less interesting and/or helpful in terms of communicating information. Bloggers also experienced a training period of rehearsals to test-run their understanding of the fine line between journalistic writing and blogging.

Magee also developed a system of procedures to report malfunctioning technology from the field, having planned for back-up systems that could be quickly deployed to minimize interruptions and lost content. He provided field teams with "packs" that contained the necessary equipment to move from location to location. Students had also been encouraged to take along

their personal laptops and media recorders, as well as flip-phones and voice recorders, which proved not only to be compact and versatile, but also critical when the inevitable glitches occurred with the more complicated, university-issued audio and video equipment. Since transmitting large video and audio files is often cumbersome and can overtax operating memory and force periodic system crashes, Magee also used a variety of methods to streamline the delivery of content back to the home base, including Gmail. When equipment failures occurred, field reporters were able to turn to their personal equipment and produce mini-stories or alternative content. Since many of these reporters—through training and careful preparation— had come to view their approaches as a mix of journalistic and personal experiences, they pooled their efforts when producing multimedia news reports, then channeled their more subjective impressions into alternative messaging such as blogs and tweets. Finally, Magee's system of progress "flags," which he and Dr. Yaquinto had developed, for the most part, aided communication between field and home base, relaying information (also via Gmail or text-messaging) about the status of content being produced in the field at various events. These flags ranged from those dedicated to preplanned story "slugs" to "advisory" flags that alerted Magee about what audio/visual components were accompanying incoming content. Another practice that worked well on Election Day was having each field reporter's content be vetted through a team leader before forwarded to the home base. There, a team of experienced student editors further scrutinized content for flow, accuracy, and Associated Press style, serving as a final checkpoint before content was uploaded to the TMN website.

Magee's most valuable contribution was his project "road map," which he unveiled in mid-September and was designed to purposely avoid the pitfalls of Iowa, and, in some instances, the lapses that occurred during Missouri Primary coverage. Both projects had exposed *careerist'*

tendencies to resort to traditional practices that privilege individual packages, but which frustrate planning and coordination, and sometimes duplicate other reporters' content. Also, to avoid emulating the plans of mainstream media and/or candidates' agendas, Magee laid out original coverage in this "roadmap" that focused on issues that mattered most to Truman's audiences on campus and its other audiences around northwest Missouri.

Given the intensity and fatigue that many reported experiencing with respect to the Iowa project, many student reporters initially expressed apprehension about committing to the super-sized effort being planned for Election Day. But, in a series of concentrated recruitment binges, Magee garnered interest from students from across campus with an interest in politics—and this election, in particular—and who were excited about experimenting with a greater variety of storytelling formats. In addition, given the greater faculty involvement for this complex undertaking, Magee also involved students in a journalism course, which dedicated some of its semester's workload to providing assistance to TMN's election coverage. Finally, Magee invited newcomers to the process from outside the journalism program to participate, especially those with experience running their own blog sites and who routinely create web-based materials uploaded onto user-generated sites such as Current and YouTube. Magee himself periodically produced blogs for *The Takeaway*'s "New Voices" project.[18]

At the home base, coverage included a six-hour live radio broadcast (with Truman's KTRM 88.7), which began at 5 p.m. on Election Day. Six students worked the station that evening: two on-air hosts, a production schedule director responsible for keeping the show on track and to introduce guests, three poll/ news readers who chatted live with anchors about incoming election results, and an audio reporter who created short-length packages for air at set

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[18] http://vote2008.thetakeaway.org/2008/10/06/on-palin-politics-and-partisan-participation/ and http://vote2008.thetakeaway.org/2008/09/19/new-voices-meet-truman-states-kyle-magee/.

times throughout the night.[19] The two on-air anchors also represented an experiment, as Magee paired the KTRM's News Director with the host of the popular local blog, *The Kirksville Socialite.* Together, they provided a unique perspective that blended traditional and alternative approaches to the evening's news and event coverage.[20] Magee had worked with the two anchors to plan the broadcast and organized it into 15-minute "news blocks," featuring updates from poll analysts, live call-ins from the field teams, and live or recorded phone interviews with local politicians and scholars from across campus. Interviewees included Socialist Party Presidential candidate Brian Moore and Missouri Attorney General candidate Mike Gibbons. Other guests included an AP poll analyst calling in from New York City, a political activist and educator calling in from London, a professional journalist and Truman alum from the southern Missouri/ northern Arkansas area, and various Truman alumni who called from within the U.S. and abroad.

Each segment of the first three hours of the broadcast featured a discussion about a specific Missouri ballot initiative, ranging from clean and renewable energy to tax increases and disability legislative reform. Consequentially, the anchors interviewed key members associated with the ballot measures, providing a forum that was available nowhere else in the state that evening.

Arguably Magee's most innovative ideas was to invite students from other universities to participate in Truman's call-in show. Thus, students called in from the University of Pennsylvania, Texas Christian University, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and spoke with KTRM anchors on the air about the student vote and its impact on the election. Expanding

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[19] Yaquinto and Magee wrote and distributed press releases about TMN's widespread and comprehensive coverage to Missouri and Iowa media, along with national media. In addition, a "Promotional Portfolio" was created that highlighted pictures and profiles of each student reporter.

[20] The production board director switched between the anchor's live mics and a designated music background that featured such politically-themed songs such as The Majestic Twelve's "Condoleezza, Check My Posse!" and Woody Guthrie's "This Land Is Your Land." The director additionally created original opening and closing liners, as well as program public service announcements and spot commercials to be played between sets.

his outreach efforts to collaborate rather than compete with other Missouri colleges, Magee also arranged a student "swap," in which Truman students did on-air reports for other universities, while their reporters called in to talk with Truman anchors (several TMN reporters spoke live with both KCOU and KWUR anchors throughout the evening as part of the reporter-swap process). To further buttress the effort, content from TMN was featured on other Missouri university media websites, while links to their sites were placed on the TMN website, effectively cross-promoting original content from student-journalists from around Missouri (including, among others, Lincoln University and Southeast Missouri State University). As mentioned earlier, Truman's strongest working relationship was with Washington University in St. Louis, whose newspaper and radio station (KWUR 90.3) opened its facilities for the St. Louis team to utilize as its makeshift newsroom, offering Internet connections that enabled the team to efficiently transmit content back to the Truman campus. These collegial arrangements forged between college media in Missouri not only provided campus homes away from home, but also a sense of common purpose among these young reporters.

What TMN teams brought home from the road and put in the classroom

In the end, although Election Day coverage also yielded its share of technical malfunctions and breakdowns in communication, overall the project produced numerous and excellent examples of student journalism. TMN was again awarded for its convergence efforts, recognized in April 2009 by the Missouri Broadcasters Association for serving as the best convergent news source of any university in the state. A testament to the nature of its program, and its unique experiments with convergence, which were revisited and retooled throughout the long election cycle, adapting the model to fit the changing circumstances. The success of TMN's experiments with convergence reflects both a commitment to the study and the practice of

journalism in the 21st century. A leaner program than those at bigger universities enables

Truman's to adapt more quickly to marketplace shifts and to implement developments being

reviewed and scrutinized by its faculty and media scholars along with its innovative student

body. By April 2009 Truman also had unveiled its brand-new, state-of-the-art television studio.

Rettke, the current Executive Producer of the student-run news show, is not only the first student

media manager to produce a "live" show from its own studio (rather than videotaping a "live"

show later uploaded to campus televisions). He is also experimenting with expanded

programming that takes advantage of the new studio's capabilities and that reaches beyond the

traditional anchor-behind-the-desk approach. Truman broadcast production faculty are currently

proposing the use of Skype—a technology that allow reporters in the field to communicate in

real-time anchors back at the *News 36* studio. This tool will be most effective for future

campaign coverage by enabling field teams to report from around the state and speak with

anchors on live TV broadcasts, much as TMN did with its radio broadcast for Election Day 2008.

Changes to the other student-run media are also underway.[21] The weekly newspaper, *The Index,* faces as critical a juncture as that of any professional print medium, as it looks to expand

its web-based operations through a variety of methods. The other print medium, Truman's

regional travel and general interest magazine—*Detours—*is also expanding into web operations

as well as developing new content that better suits the more updatable and interactive web,

including travel blogs and video postcards from Truman students studying abroad or alumni who

may be invited to submit reports and exchange messages with current students. The above trends

follow the emerging rubric of media content that better matches audiences rather than developing

content that hopes to find an audience. New media tools and content invite user participation, as

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[21] KTRM 88.7 The Edge operates 24 hours a day on a newly installed high definition system, which gives the station the ability to broadcast separate signals on two distinctive channels. Most of local community stations, let alone college stations, have yet to incorporate or understand the importance of HD programming.

well as a multiplicity of voices and multimedia content, along with 24-7 access. Rather than merely shuttle or *convert* one medium's content onto another, Truman's classrooms and student media are increasingly stressing the development of convergent storytelling that reaches out to audiences to co-create content and to maximize the more user-friendly modes that are continually emerging.

More cross-promotional projects are being incorporated in between major convergent projects such as the 2008 election. *The Index* reporters are creating shortened, broadcast-friendly versions of their weekly stories to be read by KTRM DJ's throughout their radio shifts. To reciprocate, KTRM is producing weekly podcasts (to-air and feature on its website) of every newspaper editions. A professor-led course has been launched that produces smaller convergent projects with audio, video, print, blog and photo elements that are dedicated to TMN's network-wide website, which in turn continues to promote the long-standing brands of *KTRM, The Index, News 36,* and *Detours*.

Magee, as his last duty as Convergence Coordinator, is currently working with the KTRM News Director to help develop an extensive community calendar that utilizes a Microsoft Excel-based agenda that maps out important events in and around the university, Kirksville community, and surrounding areas. It will detail story ideas and share contacts, which are then made available to all student media leaders and reporters (via Google Docs). Other convergent-minded projects are in the works, including interactive community poetry slams, a TMN youtube channel, and web-based, "graffiti walls" that use Flash player to feature student-produced art.

While the experience of covering a presidential election provided Truman student media with an exciting and memorable experience, it also stands as a landmark moment, from which to plan and gauge its evolution and to chart its consistent progress. Technology remains both a

blessing and a challenge,[22] as does the further incorporation of new media products, practices and tools that must be incorporated with an eye toward enhancing journalism—not supplanting many of its most enduring tenets, including a commitment to accuracy, fairness, and community relevance. However, as Truman remains an institution dedicated to the modes and methods of interdisciplinary inquiry, its journalism faculty and student media are also reiterating their commitment to a journalism that encourages critical thinking and one that embraces the input of all its voices—whether *careerist*, *idealist*, or *alternalist*. The goal is to make room for more voices who collectively offer intelligent and purposeful journalism while striving to keep pace with practical and technological expansions.

The lessons learned over the past year and a half from the many road trips and experiments associated with election year coverage have yielded one clear maxim: that no matter how much things change, they stay the same. American democracy and its political processes require an active and responsible press as well as an informed and astute citizenry. For the Truman Media Network, however much it evolves, it remains a learning environment where students are urged to be resourceful storytellers, active participants, and responsible citizens who remain committed to a free and open society.

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[22] That may require a systemic updates and uploads of more recent versions of Avid Xpress Pro with access to compatible versions of Adobe Audition capable of functioning on the road or in the field with a stable Internet connection would help cure much of the dilemma.

PRE-IOWA SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE TO TMN PARTICIPANTS

1) *What aspect are you most excited about in connection with being a TMN reporter in Iowa? Choose from the following options to guide your answer or use your own words:*

    a) I hope to learn more about the political process;
    b) I hope to learn more about a favorite candidate;
    c) I hope to learn more about how reporting works in practice while covering such a complex and high-profile event.

2) *What remaining questions do you have about how the caucus or election process works? (For example, I still don't know how votes are counted exactly and I plan to cram or discuss with teammates on the way up!)*

3) *What remaining questions or reservations do you have about your role as a reporter for the Truman Media Network? (For example, I'm still unclear about what tasks I'll be doing. Or -- I have reservations about doing one thing over another -- like using a camera or going up to a famous face and asking a tough question for the record.)*

4) *What aspect are you most looking forward to?*

5) *What aspect are you most nervous about?*

POST-IOWA SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE TO TMN PARTICIPANTS

1. Assess your role as a reporter who participated in the Iowa caucuses:
   a. was access to candidates easier or more difficult than you had anticipated?
   b. was talking with caucusers and getting them to articulate their ideas/opinions easier or more difficult than you had anticipated?
   c. were you able to ask the questions you wanted of candidates and/or caucusers or were events happening so fast that you found yourself reporting what you could whenever info became available?

2. Do you think the media "contributes" to the political process, "complicates" the political process, or accurately "communicates" how the political process in Iowa works?

3. Considering what you saw and heard while in Iowa, assess the media's performance as a whole in Iowa:
   a. as "participants" in the political process with control over the flow of information;
   b. as "witnesses" to history merely reporting (in as neutral a manner as possible) what they see/hear to the public;
   c. "cheerleaders" focusing on front-runners as "winners" who can go the distance;
   d. some combination of the above OR none of the above, explaining in your own words how well you think the media as a whole did.

4. Has the Iowa experience strengthened, weakened or left unchanged your attitudes about being a reporter?

5. Has the Iowa experience affected your views about politics?
   a. You better understand the election process;
   b. You better understand a particular candidate after seeing him/her so "up close and personal";
   c. You more or less hold the same views as you had before going to Iowa.

6. How would you assess the affect on your political views?

DAILY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TMN TEAM LEADERS

1. *How did you decide what role each reporter ended up performing? And was this decision made before the day began, as things unfolded, or a combination of the two (please discuss in detail). Did you rotate what your team members did, or try to get a rhythm going for that day by keeping each person on one task for a sustained period of time?*

2. *As reporting tasks were completed, how did you choose what material to send along to TMN and in what form (video, audio, etc.)? Did you decide it after a team vote? Did you discuss with team members and then make the final call yourself after careful consideration of all the elements involved? Did specific conflicts arise, and if any, how were they settled?*

3. *What aspects did you think worked the best today?*

4. *What aspects did you think ran into some problems and why do you think this happened?*

5. *Considering the last question, what suggestions do you have or want to communicate about how to make things run smoother next time?*

APPENDIX B—TMN MEDIA PRODUCTION FOR IOWA

Title	Type	Dateline	Location
1. Ron Paul Headquarters	1. Print	1. Jan. 2, 2008 – Des Moines, IA	1. tmn.truman.edu
2. "Go Joe" – Biden Puts Out the Rally Call	2. Print	2. Jan. 2, 2008 – Oskaloosa, IA	2. tmn.truman.edu
3. Clinton Speaks for Students	3. Print	3. Jan. 2, 2008 – Ottumwa, IA	3. tmn.truman.edu
4. Dodd's Fighting Spirit	4. Print	4. Jan. 2, 2008 – Ottumwa, IA	4. tmn.truman.edu
5. On the Campaign Trail with the Clintons	5. Video/Print	5. Jan. 2, 2008 – Davenport, IA	5. tmn.truman.edu
6. Dodd Calls for Honest Caucus	6. Print	6. Jan. 2, 2008 – Indianola, IA	6. tmn.truman.edu
7. Radio Wrap-Up	7. Live Radio clips	7. Jan. 2, 2008 – Kirksville, MO	7. tmn.truman.edu
8. Dodd Remembers Prime Minister Bhutto	8. print	8. Jan. 3, 2008 – Indianola, IA	8. tmn.truman.edu
9. Thompson Sticks to GOP Roots	9. print	9. Jan. 3, 2008 – West Des Moines, IA	9. tmn.truman.edu
10. Unions Support Edwards	10. Video/Audio	10. Jan. 3, 2008 – Des Moines, IA	10. tmn.truman.edu
11. Campaign Trail Photos	11. Photo Gallery	11. Jan. 2/3, 2008 – Iowa	11. tmn.truman.edu
12. Students and Small Towns Part of Campaign Foci	12. Print	12. Jan. 3, 2008 – Grinnell, IA	12. tmn.truman.edu

Title	Type	Dateline	Location
13. Dems Drop Out; Some Back Obama	13. Print	13. Jan. 3, 2008 – Des Moines, IA	13. tmn.truman.edu
14. Obama, Huckabee Take Gold in Iowa	14. Print	14. Jan. 3, 2008 – Des Moines, IA	14. tmn.truman.edu
15. Students Play Integral Role in Caucus	15. Video/Print	15. Jan. 3, 2008 – Iowa City, IA	15. tmn.truman.edu
16. Illinois Students Aid Obama Effort	16. Print	16. Jan. 3, 2008 – Iowa City, IA	16. tmn.truman.edu
17. Undecided Caucusers Wait for Caucus Woo	17. Print	17. Jan. 3, 2008 – Des Moines, IA	17. tmn.truman.edu
18. Caucus Sees Record Turnout	18. Video/Print	18. Jan. 4. 2008 – Des Moines, IA	18. tmn.truman.edu
19. Blunt Stumps for Romney in Iowa	19. Print	19. Jan. 8, 2008 – Des Moines, IA	19. tmn.truman.edu
20. Obama Slides Past Clinton; McCain Edges Huckabee in Missouri	20. Print/Photo Gallery	20. Feb. 6, 2008 – St. Louis, MO	20. tmn.truman.edu
21. MO Primaries Through Pictures	21. Photo Gallery	21. Feb. 6, 2008 – St. Louis/ Kirksville, MO	21. tmn.truman.edu
22. Tour of Iowa	22. Audio Package	22. Jan. 2, 2008 – Des Moines, IA	22. tmn.truman.edu
23. Candidates Fan Out and Campaign	23. Audio Package	23. Jan. 2, 2008 – Des Moines, IA	23. tmn.truman.edu

Title	Type	Dateline	Location
24. Biden Hammers Message	24. Audio Package	24. Jan. 2, 2008 – Oskaloosa, IA	24. tmn.truman.edu
25. Chris Dodd – Him or the Highway	25. Audio Package	25. Jan. 2, 2008 – Ottumwa, IA	25. tmn.truman.edu
26. Clinton Rallies Youth	26. Audio Package	26. Jan. 2, 2008 – Ottumwa, IA	26. tmn.truman.edu
27. Biden and Dodd Face Odds Head-On	27. Audio Package	27. Jan. 2, 2008 – Des Moines, IA	27. tmn.truman.edu
28. Live Caucus Coverage	28. Audio Blog/Audio Packages	28. Jan. 2/3, 2008—Kirksville, MO	28. tmn.truman.edu
29. Super Tuesday Run-Down	29. Audio Package	29. Feb. 5, 2008 – Kirksville, MO	29. tmn.truman.edu
30. Former President Clinton Visits Mizzou	30. Audio Package	30. Feb. 3, 2008 – Columbia, MO	30. tmn.truman.edu
31. Obamas Do Lunch	31. Video	31. Jan. 3, 2008 – Des Moines, IA	31. tmn.truman.edu
32. Iowa Governor Talks Caucus	32. 3 Video clips	32. Jan. 3, 2008 – Des Moines, IA	32. tmn.truman.edu
33. Dodd Speaks at Iowa Restaurant	33. Video	33. Jan. 3, 2008 – Iowa	33. tmn.truman.edu
34. Thompson Addresses Supporters	34. Video	34. Jan. 2, 2008 – West Des Moines, IA	34. tmn.truman.edu
35. Students Rock the Caucus	35. 2 Video clips	35. Jan. 2, 2008 – Des Moines, IA	35. tmn.truman.edu

Title	Type	Dateline	Location
36. Super Tuesday Wrap-Up	36. Video	36. Feb. 5, 2008 – Kirksville, MO	36. tmn.truman.edu
37. Super Tuesday Obama Rally	37. Video	37. Feb. 5, 2008 – St. Louis, MO	37. tmn.truman.edu
38. Kids for Obama	38. Video	38. Feb. 5, 2008 – St. Louis, MO	38. tmn.truman.edu
39. Super Tuesday Voters	39. Video	39. Feb. 5, 2008 – Kirksville, MO	39. tmn.truman.edu
40. Veterans Weigh-In	40. Video	40. Feb. 5, 2008 – St. Louis, MO	40. tmn.truman.edu
41. Clinton Watch Party	41. Video	41. Feb. 5, 2008 – St. Louis, MO	41. tmn.truman.edu

<u>Additional Media</u>

42. http://2008caucus.blogspot.com/ -- Caucuses and beyond from insider-student perspective. Site includes video, audio and blog commentary from a team of four independent students loaning themselves out to various campaigns (McCain, Clinton, Paul and Huckabee). The blogs and videos include strong reactions both to the candidates as well as the media as they circle each camp and begin to frame the caucus.

43. http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=2059459&id=36100383; http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=2059465&id=36100383 -- Personal photo albums (via facebook) created by an "alternalistic" media photographer who participated with the TMN Iowa group. These photos (with commentary) highlight the key moments of the caucus experience for the individual.

1. *What was your most enjoyable part of the St. Louis Coverage?*

STUDENT A: I cannot choose just one aspect of the St. Louis coverage that was the most enjoyable. The entire experience was something that I wouldn't trade for anything. I had the opportunity to work with fellow journalists and professional ones and had some of the most meaningful conversations I've ever had while on assignment—both with sources and journalists. In addition to stretching myself and putting what I've learned in class to the test, I learned something very valuable about journalism—how to completely change directions and mindsets in a split second. One minute I was primarily a print reporter, the next video, the next audio, the next photographer. It was hard work and high stress, but I really enjoyed every minute of it.

STUDENT B: The most enjoyable part of the St. Louis coverage was working in the field with a team. It was hands-on experience that I had never had before. I liked working under pressure and writing about events in progress. It was also fun to be on location and make contact with politicians. I got to interview Mike Gibbons, the non-winning candidate for Attorney General of Missouri. It was a professional learning experience.

STUDENT C: The most enjoyable part was our "headquarters" for the evening; I like the idea of converging with the [Washington University] radio station, even though we weren't technically. It was a good atmosphere, despite the limited space.

2. *What would you do differently if you had the opportunity again?*

STUDENT A: If I had the opportunity to do it again, I don't know that I would do anything differently. The only thing organizationally that was hard to keep up with was the assignment flags—I wish there would have been a better way to relay story status to home-base rather than e-mail. I think if we could have set up a text system of some sort, I would have felt more like I was informing my superiors of what was happening. Also, I would have kept my own blog in addition to the content I submitted. There were so many things I couldn't have necessarily talked about in articles but may have fit into a blog (like frustrations with sources not talking, not being able to take pictures/footage near the polls, not being able to talk to Obama pollsters, etc.). It would've also been nice to have had time to talk to more community members.

STUDENT B: I would have tried to be more involved with other aspects (radio, television, etc.). I would have tried to blog more frequently.

STUDENT C: I wish some of my equipment had been up to snuff. Then I would have been able to put more stories out. Also, we were never sure we knew exactly how to get to and from places, so we had to scramble a lot (and panic). Perhaps just know the area or where we're going better next time.

3. *What did you expect and what was different than you expected?*

STUDENT A: I honestly did not know what to expect going into this experience. The only thing I knew is that I was going to have to think on my toes, roll with the punches, and anticipate everything. Something that surprised me about myself was how I reacted when having to do a television story about an event with a huge amount of people (like a watch party). I felt overwhelmed and like I didn't know where to start, what to do with my equipment, etc. I feel like if I would have at least had a camera person to help me out just a little that might have been better, however, I do understand that it was good experience because backpack journalism is an up and rising trend in the industry.

STUDENT C: From the prep we received in the meeting and the morning of, I was rather nervous. You did a fine job explaining what happened if we encountered riots and catastrophes that day! Maybe just map it out so we know where each member of the team is supposed to be at all times, if possible. This way people can hold themselves accountable and not blame those in charge.

4. *What job were you slated to do? What did you end up doing? How different was that job?*

STUDENT A: I think I was technically supposed to be a print reporter at first, but … I ended up doing practically everything except for blogging. Since there are different writing styles and newsgathering techniques for each medium, it was sometimes difficult to switch gears completely which is why most of what I wrote ended up being what I think is more of an online style. I pretty much rolled with the punches and picked up whatever needed to be done.

STUDENT B: I really enjoyed blogging. I loved looking for the stories behind the stories. I love interviewing people and learning about their personal stories and reasons behind the choices they make, especially during election time. I enjoy storytelling, especially when I can be more free with the language and descriptions I use. I would like to blog more in the future.

5. *How where the people around you?*

STUDENT A: All the people around me worked very well with each other. We helped eachother out, stuck together for the most part, and encouraged eachother to keep going. It was a tiring experience, but I believe that my team pushed me to keep producing the best work I could under the circumstances.

STUDENT B: Our team exhibited a lot of interconnectedness; however, as with most teamwork, there were clashes at times. We were under pressure, but in the end, we got the job done and learned a lot along the way.

STUDENT C: Wonderful! Energetic and positive! Serious, but not too serious.

6. *How did these people affect your experience or your job?*

STUDENT A: These people encouraged me and absolutely made the experience what it was. It gave me slight comfort knowing that if something failed, my team was there at the events to back me up and, at certain times, calm me down a bit. I wish there could have been more time to get to know my entire team before the coverage, but I felt like we had good team chemistry while still holding focus of our individual assignments.

STUDENT B: I felt like most of the people I was working with knew what they were doing. I had no problem taking instruction from them because I trusted their experience.

STUDENT C: They kept e going and made the journey enjoyable. Everyone was helping in assisting me … when they weren't working on something of their own. I like how we all briefly talked about what everyone was doing for each story and built each other up.

7. *What was it like working at/with WashU?*

STUDENT A: It was nice to have a place where we felt that our computers and equipment was secured. It would have been nice to have more reliable internet connections (needing passwords and user names and such) but we made due. It would have been fun to coordinate with more of WashU's media outlets and go out with their teams as well just to see how other outlets work and how other schools are viewing/working with convergence.

STUDENT B: It was fun working with other college students. It's always interesting to see what other students are learning and doing and how our studies and programs compare.

STUDENT C: Incredible! the students there were just lovely! Period!

8. *What was your favorite part of the coverage?*

STUDENT A: My favorite part of the coverage was the sources we talked to. There were so many different people walking in and out of polling places, at rallies and events. It was interesting hearing their stories and being able to

help tell their stories as well. I felt like I was helping inform our audiences of who was voting for the candidates—really giving a face to the demographics you hear so much about during the campaign season. We were there, right in the middle of all of it and when the night ended at the Obama rally, it was a culmination of everything we'd done. It was an emotional experience being in the biggest rally in St. Louis while Obama spoke for the first time as President Elect and to be surrounded by people who have worked and donated their time to his cause. Their reaction to the election's outcome can only be compared to when a beloved sports team wins a championship—people in the streets with signs and flags, horns honking, strangers hugging and crying. It was incredible.

STUDENT B: My favorite part of the coverage was being in the middle of the action as everything unfolded. I also loved interviewing a variety of people and telling their stories.

STUDENT C: The evening, of course! We didn't even have to try to approach people! They came up to us and told us how they were feeling!

APPENDIX C-2: STUDENT SURVEY RESPONSES (Pre-Election Day)
Please fill out this survey ahead of TMN's coverage of this week's 2008 Election Day events. (<u>Use the reverse side if you need more room to write.</u>)

2) *What aspect are you most excited about in connection with being a TMN reporter this week? <u>Choose from the following options</u> the one that best describes how you feel right now:*

      a) The chance to witness first-hand the political process.
      b) The chance to cover, perhaps even get close to, a particular candidate.
      c) The chance to experience reporting such a complex and high-profile event.

3) What questions do you still have about how Election Day will work? (<u>Check which apply</u>.)

    _____ I still don't understand how and when votes come in across Missouri?
    _____ I still don't know who's running for every office but plan to cram soon!
    _____ I still don't know how we're going to coordinate everything?
    _____ I still don't know if I'm ready to do my part?

3) *What questions do you still have about your TMN reporting role?* (<u>Check which apply</u>.)

    _____ I'm still unclear about what reporting or tasks I'll be doing?
    _____ I'm still unclear where my content is going to end up?
    _____ I'm still unclear what my "team" is doing? (And I prefer to work alone.)
    _____ I'm still unclear on ??? (FILL IN YOUR OWN): _____
    _____

+4) *What aspect of Election Day are you most looking forward to?* (<u>Check which apply</u>.)

    _____ I'm looking forward to being at events talking to voters?
    _____ I'm looking forward to meeting high-profile politicians?
    _____ I'm looking forward to witnessing how campaigns work up close?
    _____ I'm looking forward to seeing what I can do! I'm a news junkie!   _____ I'm looking forward to seeing what my team does! I'm into the road trip!
    _____ I'm looking forward to talking with politician; I'm a political junkie!
    _____ I'm looking forward to being able to report on my political choice.

5) Is there anything else on your mind you'd like to share?
    About TMN?

    About the political process?

    About this year's election in general?

TEAMS FOR ELECTION DAY COVERAGE

Truman Media Network 2008 General Election Coverage Team Breakdown

St. Louis Red Team (9):
HEADQUARTERS: Washington University in St. Louis
STORYTELLING FOCUS: Student & Urban
Dr. Marilyn Yaquinto - **Advisor**
Dan Rettke – **Point-Person/ News 36** Executive Producer

REPORTERS (7):
Ryan Dalton – **COMM 349** Audio
Hannah Douglas – **News 36** Video
Mark Hardy – **COMM 251** Photography
Julia Hansen – **Index** Print
Rachael Mikel – **COMM 251** Video
Sara Moore - **COMM 349** Print
Jesslyn Tenhouse – **COMM 349** Blogger

Jefferson City/Columbia White Team (10):
HEADQUARTERS: Secretary of States Office (Jefferson City)
University of Missouri-Columbia/ Stephens College (Columbia)
STORYTELLING FOCUS: Student & Rural
Dr. Julie Seidler – **Advisor**
Sarah Scott – **Point-Person/ Index** Print

REPORTERS (8):
Brent Foster – **COMM 349** Blogger
Arron Hustead – **KTRM** Audio
Shane Haas – **COMM 349** Video
Margaret Hooper – **News 36** Video
Kristyn Potter – **COMM 349** Photography
Anne Rebar – **COMM 251** Print
Krisha Shrestha – **COMM 251** Audio
Shannon Walter – **COMM 349** Photography

Kirksville Blue Team (10):
HEADQUARTERS: Truman Media Network Newscenter
STORYTELLING FOCUS: Student & Rural
Prof. Don Krause – **Advisor**
Jackie Gonzalez – **Point-Person/ KTRM** Audio

REPORTERS (9):
Joe Bell – **Index** Print
Chris Boning – **Index** Print
Steven Chinnock – **COMM 349** Blogger
Ben Green – **COMM 349** Photography
Alex Halfmann – **News 36** Video
Jill Jacoby – **COMM 349** Video
Andy Moore – **COMM 349** Photography
Jared Young – **COMM 349** Audio

Kirksville Purple & White Home Team (11):
Dr. Mark Smith – **Advisor**
Heather Turner **– Point-Person/ KTRM** Co-News Director

STAFF (9):
Mitchell Bussone – **COMM 349** Anchor/Production
Matt Gowin – **COMM 349** Anchor/Production
Stephanie Hall – **COMM 251** Web Content Editor/ Copy Desk
Tiffany Owen – **COMM 349** Anchor/Production
Nathan Peabody - **COMM 349** Production
Logan Smith – **KTRM** Production
Mike Snodderely - **COMM 349** Production
Scott Turner – **KTRM** Production
Claire Ungashick – **COMM 349** Web Copy Desk

WEB STAFF: (*not confirmed, but ideally help with uploading pitches in their sites*)
Patrick Gross, Jenny Richmond – **News 36**
Lisette Metz Grulke – **TMN** (working through Broadcast Production)
Ashley Long – **KTRM**
Mike Solomon – **Index**

REPORTER TOTALS:
7 St. Louis + 8 Columbia + 9 Kirksville + 8 Kirksville Home = **34** REPORTERS
1 St. Louis + 1 Columbia + 1 Kirksville + 1 Kirksville Home = **4** POINT-PEOPLE
1 St. Louis + 1 Columbia + 1 Kirksville + 1 Kirksville Home = **4** ADVISORS
1 Collaborative Coordinator

= **42** PEOPLE

Location Point-People:
Jackie Gonzalez (**KTRM**)– Kirksville Blue Team
Dan Rettke (**NEWS 36**) – St. Louis Red Team
Sarah Scott (**INDEX**)– Jefferson City/ Columbia White Team
Heather Turner (**KTRM**)– Kirksville Purple Team

Media Point-People:
Harry Burson, Heather Turner – **KTRM** Station Manager / Co-News Director
Alicia Collins – **Detours** Collaborative Liaison
Richard Lally – **News 36** Collaborative Liaison
Julie Williams – **Index** Editor-in-Chief

Others Interested:
Paul Bischoff – **TMN** Reporter

COMM 349: News Reporting & Writing Student Required Involvement:
Mitchell Bussone – **KTRM** DJ

mrb683@truman.edu (309) 251-7246
KTRM Broadcast Anchor/Production, Photography Crew (K-VILLE OR COMO)
Steven Chinnock
sjc656@truman.edu (636) 352-9194
Blogging/Print/Video Reporting (COLUMBIA OR KIRKSVILLE)
Ryan Dalton – **KTRM** Chief Announcer
rad812@truman.edu (314) 221-8452
KTRM Broadcast Anchor or Production, Audio Reporting (KIRKSVILLE OR STL)
Brent Foster – **Index** Sports Reporter / **KTRM** Sports Broadcaster
bef448@truman.edu (573) 338-1773
Print/ Blogging Reporting (COLUMBIA OR ST. LOUIS)
Matt Gowin – **107.5FM** Station Manager
mlg059@truman.edu (573) 819-5655
Audio/Blogging/Photography, KTRM Production/Anchor (K-VILLE OR COMO)
Ben Green
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KTRM Broadcast Production, Photography/Blogging Reporting (KIRKSVILLE)
Shane Haas – **Index News** Reporter
seh778@truman.edu (314) 680-7182
Photography/ Blogging, Video Crew (COLUMBIA OR KANSAS CITY)
Jill Jacoby – **News 36** Videographer
jaj250@truman.edu (314) 288-4558
Audio/Video Reporting, Video/Photography Crew (COLUMBIA OR KIRKSVILLE)
Andy Moore
apm813@truman.edu (314) 471-8104
Photography/Print Reporting (KIRKSVILLE OR ST. LOUIS)
Sarah Moore – **News 36** News Director
sym661@truman.edu (314) 497-2766
Video/Print/Blogging Reporting (KANSAS CITY OR KIRKSVILLE)
Tiffany Owen – **KTRM** DJ
tlo7227@truman.edu (660) 216-6742
KTRM Broadcast Anchor/Production, Photography (K-VILLE OR COLUMBIA)
Nathan Peabody
Kristyn Potter
kmp292@truman.edu (314) 827-8669
Print/Blogging/Photography Reporting, Web Content (ST. LOUIS OR COMO)
Mike Snodderly – **Detours** Photographer
Jesslyn Tenhouse
jesslyn.tenhouse@gmail.com (217) 653-4121
Print/Blogging/Video Reporting (COLUMBIA OR ST. LOUIS)
Claire Ungashick
claire.unga@gmail.com (816) 804-9410
Blogging/Print Reporting, Web Copy Desk (KIRKSVILLE OR KANSAS CITY)
Shannon Walter
sjw189@truman.edu (417) 689-3446
Photography/ Blogging, Photography Crew (COLUMBIA OR ST. LOUIS)
Jared Young
jay983@truman.edu (660) 707-3788
Photography or Audio Crew, Photography (COLUMBIA OR KIRKSVILLE)

COMM 251: Media Writing Student Volunteer Involvement:
Stephanie Hall – **COMM 251**: Media Writing
slh7228@truman.edu (515) 554-1317
Web Content Editor, Web Copy Desk (KIRKSVILLE HOME-TEAM)
Mark Hardy – **TMN** Reporter/ Photographer
zarkfive@gmail.com (314) 537-2104

Video Reporting, Photography, Blogging (ST. LOUIS OR KIRKSVILLE)
Faith Maslonka – **COMM 251**: Media Writing
fbm5181@gmail.com (918) 693-9061
Audio Reporting, (ST. LOUIS OR KANSAS CITY)
Rachael Mikel – **COMM 251**: Media Writing
rnm479@truman.edu
Audio or Video Reporting, Photography Crew (ST. LOUIS OR K.C.)
Anne Rebar – **COMM 251**: Media Writing
amr082@truman.edu
Print, Audio or Blogging Reporting (ST. LOUIS OR KIRKSVILLE)
Krisha Shrestha – **COMM 251**: Media Writing
ks6524@truman.edu
Audio Reporting, Audio, Video or Photography Crew (ST. LOUIS OR K.C.)

ELECTION DAY TMN CONTENT PRODUCTION

2008 General Election Coverage Materials

Print Stories:
"Student Voter Expectations on Election Day 2008" – Jared Young
"Positive Perspectives on Local Voting" – Joe Bell (KIRKSVILLE REPORTING TEAM)
"Students Divided on Religion as a Campaign Issue" – Joe Bell
"Incentives Offered to Get Out the Vote" – Chris Boning
"Lincoln University Voters Make Voices Heard" – Anne Rebar (JEFF. CITY/COLUMBIA TEAM)
"St. Louis' 8th Ward Shows Enthusiastic Volunteer Presence" – Sarah Moore
"Washington University Students Learn Toward Obama" – Julia Hansen
"Basic Necessities are of Concern to St. Louis Voters" – Sarah Moore
"Suburban Voters Vital to State, Nation" – Julia Hansen
"Impact of Campaign Support Pays Off" – Rachael Mikel (ST. LOUIS TEAM)
"Respect Abounds for Gibbon's Positive Campaign" – Julia Hansen

Blogs:
"Carnahan Warns Against Text Message Scam" – Brent Foster (JEFF. CITY/COLUMBIA TEAM)
"AP Calls Governor Race" – Brent Foster
"Local Issues: The Issue, Perspective and Promise" – Jesslyn Tenhouse (ST. LOUIS TEAM)
"Pageant Perspective" – Jesslyn Tenhouse
"Blue Note Democratic Party" – Sarah Scott (JEFF. CITY/COLUMBIA TEAM)
"Hulshof Concedes" – Brent Foster
"Stories Behind Vote Choices" – Jesslyn Tenhouse
"Piercings for Votes" – Steven Chinnock (KIRKSVILLE REPORTING TEAM)
"Signs Foil Students Looking to Vote in Student Union" – Steven Chinnock
"Around Lincoln University's Campus" – Brent Foster
"Sticker Shock: Campaign Stickers Dominate Wardrobes" – Steven Chinnock

Photo Galleries:
"Kirksville Voting Perspectives" – Ben Green & Andy Moore (KIRKSVILLE REPORTING TEAM)
"Lincoln University Votes" – Kristyn Potter & Shannon Walter (JEFF. CITY/COLUMBIA TEAM)
"Washington University Protest Art" – Mark Hardy (ST. LOUIS TEAM)
"Jay Nixon Rally" – Kristyn Potter & Shannon Walter
"Jefferson City" – Kristyn Potter & Shannon Walter
"Kirksville Watch Parties" – Ben Green & Andy Moore
"Jefferson City & Columbia" – Kristyn Potter & Shannon Walter
"St. Louis Snapshots" – Mark Hardy

Audio Packages:
"First-Time Voters" – Jared Young (KIRKSVILLE TEAM)
"Secretary Carnahan Interview" – Arron Hustead (JEFF CITY/COLUMBIA TEAM)
"Meet Joe Logan" – Ryan Dalton (ST. LOUIS TEAM)
"Election Official on Voter Turnout" – Ryan Dalton
"African-Americans for Obama" – Matt Gowin (KIRKSVILLE HOME TEAM)
"Barnett Watch Party"- Matt Gowin
"Kirksville Watches and Waits" – Chris Boning (KIRKSVILLE REPORTING TEAM)
"International Students Affected By Election" – Matt Gowin
"To Vote, or Not to Vote? Maybe Not" – Matt Gowin
"Adair County Race Update" – Jared Young
"Brother Jedd Back Again" – Jared Young
"Power to the Polls" – Krisha Shrestha (JEFFERSON CITY/COLUMBIA TEAM)
"McClanahan Victorious Again" – Mike Snodderley (KIRKSVILLE HOME TEAM)

Video Packages:
"Adair County Republicans" – Richard Lally (KIRKSVILLE HOME TEAM)
"Early Kirksville Voting" – Alex Halfmann (KIRKSVILLE REPORTING TEAM)
"Us on Us" – Richard Lally
"Polling Station Perspective" – Hannah Douglas (ST. LOUIS TEAM)
"Interview with Russ Carnahan" – Sarah Moore and Dan Rettke (ST. LOUIS TEAM)
"Free Piercings on Election Day" – Jill Jacoby (KIRKSVILLE REPORTING TEAM)
"Gibbons Watch-Party" – Sarah Moore
"Secretary of State Update" – Margaret Hooper (JEFF. CITY/COLUMBIA TEAM)
"The University Polling Perspective" – Shane Haas and Margaret Hooper

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ELECTION DAY TMN COVERAGE "ROADMAP"

TRUMAN MEDIA NETWORK 2008 ELECTION COVERAGE:

This is the ROADMAP for the 2008 ELECTION COVERAGE. As the Collaborative Coordinator, I take it upon myself to take the BEST INTERESTS of EACH MEDIA into consideration everyday, especially the views and opinions of my fellow MEDIA LEADERS and respective FACULTY. This plan is the BUILDING-BLOCK for our coverage in the FIRST WEEK OF NOVEMBER. I appreciate your input and ANY QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, CONCERNS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS AS TO THE NATURE OF THE ROADMAP AND ITS CONTENTS.

This Roadmap was created by Kyle Magee, Truman Media Network Collaborative Coordinator. Any reproduction of its contents thereof should be verified before being used.

2008 GENERAL ELECTION ROADMAP FOR COVERAGE:

THE COLLABORATIVE COORDINATOR:
Just to get this out of the way, the Collaborative Coordinator **WILL NOT BE REPORTING AND PROVIDNG CONTENT TO TMN**. This means that the Coordinator will actually be coordinating the **ENTIRE PROCESS** beforehand and on the actual day of coverage, and, in my thinking, would be spread **TOO THIN** to do anything else. **Any comments, questions or concerns are welcomed.**

Heather Turner and I are actually working on a project entitled "Forward Planning/Master Calendar" which will enable the media outlets of TMN to have access to a complete run-down of calendar events across the region and state for coverage. It will also include contacts in just about every organization we can think of! This can also be used for regular TMN Collaboration and individual media production schedules

LOCATIONS ACROSS MISSOURI:
1.) **RED: St. Louis, Mo. (Home Base: Washington University in St. Louis)**
2.) **WHITE: Kirksville, Mo. (Home Base: Newscenter)**
3.) **BLUE: Jefferson City, Mo. (Home Base: Secretary of State's Office)**

4.) **PURPLE & WHITE: Kirksville Home-Based Team** ***(TO BE EXPLAINED LATER)***

The locations will be areas in which a specific team will go out to cover specific events related to the **2008 Election** in terms of the **1.) STUDENT, 2.) RURAL and 3.) URBAN** voter demographics and issue-interests.

The locations, as per the **Vote 2006**, **2007 Missouri Primary** and **2008 VP Debate Coverage**, have been visited before and most of the students involved with the process are familiar as such.

ST. LOUIS: the largely-Democratic suburban representation will provide great coverage for TMN, especially in terms of the **STUDENT/URBAN** voter perspective, as our contacts at Washington University in St. Louis have expressed an interest in working more closely with us in November.

As per the Vice-Presidential Debate Coverage, contacts have been made with Washington University- St. Louis student media (KWUR Radio, WUTV22 and Student Life Newspaper) who helped house our TMN reporters and would like to work collaboratively in the future. This means that we will facilitate the direction and cross-promotion of **CONTENT**, and perhaps engage in **COLLABORATIVE REPORTING** in-the-field. Contacts are also being made with **Forest Park Community College**, **University of Missouri-St. Louis** and **Saint Louis University**.

The team can also choose to stop by Columbia on the way to St. Louis and report from the campus of **Stephens College** and **University of Missouri-Columbia**. Contacts are being worked on there. **Any additional contacts?**

JEFFERSON CITY: Being the state's capital, it is imperative that we take advantage of our coverage their by having a more **POLITICAL** focus on the coverage, i.e., interviewing Robin Carnahan, talking with other Missouri politicians, etc.

Contacts are being made in the **Secretary of State's Office**, as well as with **Lincoln University**. **Any additional contacts?**

KIRKSVILLE: Given that we cover not only events and issue here on campus, but in the community, it is only fitting that we should attempt to keep an eye on what is going on in-and-around town, especially with **RURAL** voters and their perspectives.

Contacts are being made with various student organizations, including College Republicans, Democrats, Libertarians (for another debate), Vote Local, Rebecca McClanahan and other District 9 politicians. **Any additional contacts?**

Therefore, each of the locations will have a primary focus for the coverage that will be generated by the teams present in the field. The teams will provide updates in their specific media, as well as organizing regular KTRM Broadcast updates with the KTRM Anchors (TO BE EXPLAINED LATER). The teams should not be **FORCED** to go to the locations to cover things; rather, <u>they should **CHOOSE** to get involved **VOLUNTARILY**</u>. *****Even though we face the problem of being potential short-handed, we need to ensure that the reporters and teams will be made up of willing and able individuals.** ***

INDIVIDUAL MEDIA OUTLETS REPRESENTING TMN:
Index Newspaper
KTRM 88.7 The Edge
News 36 KTRM-TV
Detours Travel Magazine

As of yesterday, Thursday, October 2, 2008, Rebecca Moser and the Detours staff decided NOT to get involved with the TMN 2008 Election Coverage as per their request. **Any additional information regarding their withdrawal would be greatly appreciated.**

FACULTY INVOLVED WITH THE TMN COVERAGE:

The faculty advisors to the specific media outlets are welcomed to serve as the advisors who accompany students to the specific locations. An advisor should also be present with both the Kirksville location and home-based teams.

Advisors include:
Prof. Don Krause (Index)
Dr. Julie Seidler (Detours)
Dr. Mark Smith (KTRM), ADVISING THE KIRKSVILLE HOME TEAM
Dr. Marilyn Yaquinto (News 36), TRAVELING TO ST. LOUIS

Any additional advisors interested in being involved should be noted to the Collaborative Coordinator.

INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED WITH THE TMN COVERAGE:
Individuals who decide to be a part of the Truman Media Network coverage can be of any class rank, age or media affiliation. The interested party must obtain clearance from their specific Media Leader before putting their name down to work. They must also clear with their Media Leader as to how they will be compensated for the coverage, i.e., if they work scholarship hours, they should receive the necessary hours for work. If they work for pay, they should be paid the **SAME AMOUNT** that they are paid for a regular story **IN THEIR SPECIFIC MEDIA**.

The individuals who decide to get involved will have to demonstrate skill, independence and competence in their specific media coverage. This means that they, along with the other members of their group, will have to attend **MANDATORY** sessions **AFTER** they have signed up for coverage ***(TO BE EXPLAINED LATER)***.

Individuals Involved:
18 COMM 349: News Reporting & Writing students
Harry Burson – KTRM Station Manager
Alicia Collins – Detours Collaborative Liaison
Lisette Metz-Gruelke – Broadcast Production Independent-Study
Rebecca Moser – Detours Editor-in-Chief
Richard Lally – News 36 Collaborative Liaison
Kyle Magee – TMN Collaborative Coordinator
Dan Rettke – News 36 Executive Producer
Heather Turner – KTRM Collaborative Liaison (in coordination with Jackie Gonzalez)
Julie Williams – Index Editor-in-Chief

In addition to these individuals, a detailed list of Team Breakdowns is being developed in the coming week.

LOCATION-TEAM BREAKDOWN:
At least **1 reporting team** per location
  1 **faculty advisor** per team whose responsibilities include:
    Driving the University Van
    Providing any assistance or advice in the field regarding content
    Helping the subsequent point person coordinate the team together

TEAM-BREAKDOWN MATHEMATICS:
3 REPORTING TEAMS (consisting of 5 members) =
15 REPORTING INDIVIDUALS

3 TECHNICAL TEAMS (consisting of at least 2 members) =
+- 6 "TECHIES"

1 KIRKSVILLE HOME-BASED TEAM (consisting of KTRM Live, News 36 Crew, Index Reporters & TMN Web)
= **9 INDIVIDUALS**

*4 FACULTY ADVISORS (one per team)
= **4 FACULTY**

1 COLLABORATIVE COORDINATOR (exact location undecided at this time)

TOTALS: *35 INDIVIDUALS DEDICATED TO TMN FOR ELECTION COVERAGE

***1.) THIS FIGURE ASSUMES THAT THE 18 MEMBERS OF THE COMM 349 NEWS REPORTING & WRITING CLASS ARE INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS OF REPORTING ONLY**
***2.) IF MORE THAN ONE FACULTY MEMBER CAN/AND/OR IS WILLING TO GO ALONG WITH A SPECIFIC TEAM, THEY ARE WELCOME TOO. OTHERWISE, THEY ARE WELCOME TO HELP OUT WITH MORE EXTENDED HOME-BASED COVERAGE.**
***3.) IF IT TURNS OUT THAT MORE THAN THE BASE AMOUNT (31) PEOPLE ARE INTERESTED IN GETTING INVOLVED, THE AMOUNT OF TEAMS AND INDIVIDUALS MAKING UP THOSE TEAMS WILL BE RE-ANALYZED AND RE-ESTABLISHED BY THE MEDIA BOARD.**

Team includes: **1.) PRINT, 2.) AUDIO, 3.) VIDEO, 4.) PHOTO, 5.) BLOG, 6.) *TECHNICAL**

**At least two people* per technical team
TECHNICAL SUPPORT TEAM:
The **technical teams** will help with each of the following:
      Organizing and arranging equipment prior to leaving for the coverage
      Keeping a detailed checklist on what equipment is being used
      Having a working knowledge of each piece of equipment
          Audio, Video, Print, Blog, Photo
      Setting up **editing** and **researching** equipment at each location
      Setting up **all live-interviews, broadcasts or updates** back to the Newscenter

The technical teams do not necessarily have to be made up of students. If a faculty member feels responsible enough to cover this position, then that can be appropriate. A student can, however, also take up the position if needed. If needed, a technical team can be made up of a student and/or faculty or staff member as needed to fill the positions. The technical support teams will not provide **ANY COVERAGE**; they will focus solely on the technological aspects of the coverage. They will receive compensation, either scholarship, institutional or regular pay (if a faculty or staff member)

The technical support individuals should also make sure that at their respective **LOCATION**, they will have **REASONABLE & SUSTAINABLE ACCESS TO POWER SUPPLIES AND THE INTERNET!!!** They will work in tandem with any individuals at the locations to get this sorted out.

MEDIA **MAIN POINT-PERSON:**
1 **main point-person** per media (**Index**, **KTRM**, **News 36**)
      This person will act as **the direct liaison** to the TMN Collaborative Coordinator
      This person may also be a **technical/ reporter** individual to a team
      In the weeks prior to the coverage, this person will attend the Collaborative Meetings and help arrange the process of what will happen for each of their media
      This persons **responsibilities** will include:
          Arranging the travel time, route and distances en route to the location
          Coordinating the necessary accommodations/ expenditures at location

This point-person will meet with the other point-people and the Collaborative Coordinator to discuss the manner in which they will want to gather their team together. This person will plan mainly around their **MEDIA** they represent, rather than the **LOCATION** they are going to.

LOCATION **MAIN POINT-PERSON:**
 1 **location point-person** per location (does not matter which media)
      This person **must be a member of the team** at that location
      This person will coordinate with the main point-person to ensure the location
      This persons responsibilities include:
          Organizing and gathering the team together

Coordinating with the **technical liaison** to arrange for necessary equipment
Coordinating media contacts/ credentialing at their respective location

This person will report to the main point-person on all issues, comments or questions before addressing the Collaborative Coordinator. This person will also arrange everything with the **LOCATION** in mind, rather than the **MEDIA OUTLET** they represent.

This person will also be responsible for compiling a list of Master Contacts that will be put together for use in the field and on the day of Tuesday, November 4, 2008 ***(TO BE EXPLAINED LATER)***.

THESE INDIVIDUALS CAN COME FROM THE NEWS REPORTING & WRITING CLASS, ESPECIALLY IF THEY ARE AFFILIATED WITH A TMN MEDIA ORGANIZATION

HOME-BASED TEAM:
The Kirksville home-based team will consist of the following representatives:

A KTRM Live-Broadcast team (consisting of **AT LEAST two** live-broadcast anchors)
A News 36 Camera Crew (consisting of **AT LEAST** a **reporter and cameraman**)
An Index Reporting Crew (consisting of **AT LEAST two reporters**)
A TMN Website Crew (consisting of **AT LEAST** three website editors)

These home-based teams will cover events **going on here in Kirksville** and **provide updates to their respective websites and the TMN website**. The teams will focus solely on their respective content and that will be their media work for the week, i.e., they **should not be assigned to a different story** the week of Tuesday, November 4, 2008.

The KTRM Live-Broadcast team can host guests, speakers, debates between student political groups, etc. while on the air at KTRM. The broadcast will be set-up on the live stream and recorded to be put up on the TMN website.

Both the News 36 and Index teams will cover events in Kirksville, i.e. student political group election-watch & rally-parties, the events at the Adair County Court House and/or other important campus events that might come up.

PROMOTION:
In the weeks leading up to the coverage, the Truman Media Network will be promoted on the individual media websites. This means that a detailed outline of the coverage will be put up in the general viewing area of the website.
        The Coordinator is creating a Truman Media Network 2008 General Election Promotional Portfolio that contains a picture and brief biography of everyone involved in the Coverage process that will be made available for public viewing at each of the aforementioned and mentioned promotional outlets.
        In addition, each member involved in the Coverage will receive a complimentary t-shirt that will be color-coded to their specific team involvement (see the team colors in the aforementioned breakdown)
        Also, the coverage will be promoted in the individual media's outlet, meaning the coverage will be promoted in each News 36 show and/or web update, each Index newspaper, and each KTRM News update, web update, package and/or on Backtalk.
        The coverage will also be promoted on the Truman Master Website. The coverage will also be mentioned on the Truman Master Calendar. It will also be in the Truman Today. It will also be chalked on the sidewalks around campus. Flyers and posters about the coverage will be distributed as per the **CSI regulations**. The coverage will also be mentioned on individual media email updates. **Any other promotional ideas are certainly welcomed and will be completed by the Collaborative Coordinator.**

The Collaborative Coordinator will take care of any and all promotions for the coverage in the weeks leading up to the Election.

TRAVEL:
Any and all traveling to and from any location as part of the Coverage will be completed **in University-sponsored Vans that Dr. Smith has agreed to arrange PRIOR TO THE DEPARTURE DATE**. Each team will have access to a **SINGLE VAN** that will be able to carry all of the **NECESSARY EQUIPMENT**, as well as the team members themselves.

<u>ACCOMMODATIONS:</u>
Housing along the way for both the St. Louis and Jefferson City teams depends solely on what the location point-people discover is best. There are several options for figuring out where to stay. 1.) The team can rent hotels and the amount would be covered by the Department. 2.) The team can stay in individually-sponsored housing (friends, family, associates, etc.) Due to the nature of the Coverage, the two traveling teams **WILL NEED A PLACE TO STAY ON THE EVENINGS OF NOVEMBER 3 AND 4.** It is up to the Location Point-Person to arrange accommodation for the appropriate teams.

<u>TRAINING SESSIONS:</u>
Any and all necessary training sessions will take place in the weeks prior to the Election. At these training sessions, **EACH TEAM** will be trained **SEPARATELY** by **EACH MEDIA OUTLET**. This means that 3 SEPARATE TRAINING SESSIONS will take place in the weeks prior to the Elections to give each team **PERSONALIZED** training in the **SPECIFICS OF EACH MEDIA**. For example, each team will learn the basics in **VIDEO** (filming, editing, capturing, reporting standards, **etc.**), **AUDIO** (recording, editing, capturing, reporting standards, **etc.**) and **PRINT** (writing, editing, reporting standards, **etc.**)

At these sessions, the Media Leaders, perhaps in consultation with their **FACULTY ADVISOR**, will administer a **TRAINING SESSION REVIEW EXAM** that each team member must complete **prior** to leaving the training session.

Suggested dates for the *****THREE TRAINING SESSIONS** include:
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2008 (TRAINING FOR ST. LOUIS TEAM)
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2008 (TRAINING FOR JEFF. CITY TEAM)
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2008 (TRAINING FOR KIRKSVILLE TEAM)

*Priority was decided upon by the distance to be traveled by each team.
* The dates for these sessions are not final; any changes will be considered promptly.

All **TRAINING SESSIONS** should include an **INTRODUCTION TO EACH MEDIA, A DEMONSTRATION OF THE REPORTING PROCESS IN EACH MEDIA, A HANDS-ON SESSION WITH THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT** and then culminate in the **REVIEW EXAM**. **Any questions, comments, suggestions and/or concerns would help.**

Each training session last **NO SHORTER THAN 2 HOURS**, so as to give **AMPLE TIME** for any questions from the team members and enough time for the Media Leaders to address their media.

At the behest of the Media Leader, they may **CHOOSE TO DESIGNATE** a team of **AT LEAST 5 MEDIA MEMBERS** from their respective media to **REPRESENT** at **EACH TRAINING SESSION**. That way, **EACH TEAM MEMBER** can be **PAIRED UP WITH A MEMBER OF YOUR MEDIA** to help out with questions. Your **FACULTY ADVISOR** should not serve as part of the 5, but as **ADDITIONAL, UPPER-LEVEL KNOWLEDGE** on the process.

Individuals who are designated as **TECHNICAL SUPPORT** for each team should also attend their respective training session so as to learn what will be going on. Depending on the nature of the technical individual's EXPERIENCE, it might be necessary to have a **TRAINING SESSSION FOR ALL TECHNICAL SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS**. It is my suggestion to make this training session at the latest point before the Election coverage so as to give them **AMPLE TIME** now and in the coming weeks to get **FAMILIAR** with the equipment, if they need to do so.

At these training sessions, individuals can share **IMPORTANT RESEARCH TIPS** for finding out the most important information about the candidates.

<u>**"DRY-RUN" POST-TRAINING PROJECT:**</u>

Each reporting team will be required to cover a post-training election-related event and see how the team works and functions together. The materials generate **DO NOT** have to run on **TMN**, but can if the team so endorses.

The schedule for such is as follows:

St. Louis Team: Training the week of 10/13 (not sure yet), Project: Post-Debate Coverage (you will cover the student & rural reaction to the final Presidential Debate)

Jeff. City/ Columbia Team: Training on Sunday, October 19, Project: Candidates Forum on 10/21 (you will cover the Forum and the reactions from the people attending)

Kirksville Team: Training on Sunday, October 26, Project: District 9 Debate at Baldwin Hall on 10/28 (you will cover the Debate between Blaine and Judy & the reactions)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:
The Collaborative Coordinator will compile necessary information regarding important websites, books, materials, etc. that might be helpful in the process of covering the Elections. **Perhaps if FACULTY are interested, they might be willing to help cover this type of thing at the ABOVE-MENTIONED TRAINING SESSIONS.**

MASTER CONTACTS LIST:
In facilitation with the location point-people, the Collaborative Coordinator will compile a Master Contact List containing every piece of **IMPORTANT INFORMATION** decided upon by the point-people. Such things will include: **TMN CONTACT NUMBERS, LOCATION CONTACT NUMBERS (ACCOMODATIONS, TRAVELING, MEDIA, NECESSARY CREDENTIALING, FOOD AND/OR ANY ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT CONTACTS)**

The Coordinator will compile this list over time as the point-people have the necessary information they need relevant to their groups. **THIS WILL BE AVAILABLE TO EACH AND EVERY MEMBER OF THE 2008 TMN ELECTION COVERAGE BOTH ONLINE IN THE FORM OF GOOGLE DOCS AND THROUGH EMAIL. PAPER COPIES CAN THEN BE MADE POSSIBLE FOR IN-THE-FIELD WORK.**

TRUMAN MEDIA NETWORK ELECTION COVERAGE AGREEMENT:
This document will be drafted by the Collaborative Coordinator for EACH INDIVIDUAL associated with the Coverage to sign off on as part of their 1.) **RECOGNITION** of the philosophy and goals of TMN, 2.) **ACCEPTING** their responsibility as a reporter, "techie", advisor, etc. and 3.) **GUARANTEEING** their maximum effort in the process. Each individual involved in the Coverage **MUST** sign this Agreement **BEFORE** partaking in the Coverage process.

CLASS-DISMISSAL LETTER:
As with the Vice-Presidential Debate Coverage, students were given these letters to ensure that their teachers knew of their absence and could work out alternate arrangements to ensure their progress and satisfaction with their academic requirements. Each individual will receive the appropriate amount of these letters, which will be **signed off upon by Dr. Marilyn Yaquinto.** The letter is pre-existing and was drafted by the Collaborative Coordinator and Dr. Yaquinto, and the language will be changed to fit the Election Coverage.

COVERAGE PLANS:
All content created, maintained and house by members participating in the 2008 General Election Coverage will be made available to the Truman Media Network Website, located at tmn.truman.edu.

In addition, the Media Leaders **WILL HAVE THE FINAL SAY** as to whether or not they would like to take **PORTIONS** of the TMN Coverage and pitch it on their **INDIVIDUAL WEBSITES**.

The coverage will come in the **CONVETIONAL FORMS** of print, audio, video, blog and photographs, **GIVEN THE NATURE OF THE TMN WEBSITE**. This means that the website currently does not support the necessary changes needed to make the content **MORE INTERACTIVE** ***(TO BE EXPLAINED LATER)***.

Any content that is covered by TMN for the Election is welcome to be used for weekly content with the Index, News 36 and KTRM in terms of the paper, the show and the news updates. **It can be tweaked and/or beefed up if needed.**

Options for extended-length coverage include: **PODCASTS, VODCASTS, EXTENDED BLOGS, SLIDESHOWS, INTERACTIVE POLLS, I-REPORT MATERIALS, USER COMMENTARY, FLASH VIDEO POLLING MAPS**

The amount of new coverage depends heavily on the materials made available to the teams ***(TO BE EXPLAINED LATER)***

In the interest of assuring content, **EACH LOCATION TEAM** will be required to fill out a **DAILY CONTENT SUMMARY & CHECK-LIST FORM** that details the coverage they have planned. Each reporter in their specific task should **AT LEAST** produce **one** story, package, blog or slideshow per **half-day** of coverage. This means that a reporter should **PRODUCE A STORY** and have it **ONLINE** within a time-frame of **SIX HOURS**. The checklist will be personalized to each team and the team's reporters as needed. This ensures that the reporter's time is not wasted, and the people who are back at the Newscenter putting things **ONLINE** are not put to **NO USE**. The checklist will be submitted to the Collaborative Coordinator at the end of the day to analyze what content is made available on the web. If **NO CONTENT** has been created as part of the Coverage, further action will be taken by the Collaborative Coordinator and the Media Leaders to either **ENSURE CONTENT** or **DELAY CONTENT** (materials published at a later date) from that team. Either way, ANYONE who signs on to work for the Coverage will **HAVE TO PRODUCE SOMETHING**; otherwise going before the Media Board to explain why. The Media Leaders, in facilitation with the location and media point-people, will ensure that these checklists are completed. The Collaborative Coordinator will create this checklist.

AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGY:
The available technology that can be utilized by the media outlets of the Truman Media Network include:
Index:
MAC Computers
Staff Cameras (Photo Use)
KTRM:
Marantz Recorders
3 Adobe Audition Editing Bays
1 Bluebox Recorder
1 Functional Station (for Live-Broadcasting purposes)
News 36:
4 Canon XLR2 Cameras
2 Canon XLR Cameras
Tripods
4 Avid Xpress Pro Editing Bays
TMN:
Newscenter (as a physical and symbolic HUB)
Travel Budget

Each media has their own specific budget. The Communication Department, as per Dr. Clark, will help to fund any ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT in that fashion ***(TO BE EXPLAINED LATER)

NEW AND/OR NECESSARY TECHNOLOGY:
The TMN Website does not currently support any **FLASH VIDEO** or **MUCH INTERACTIVE MATERIAL** besides the standard format of covering the Elections. I am in the process of working with both ITS and interested individuals who are helping to re-design and re-configure the site. **If Media Leaders so choose, they could have their specific Web Masters help out in the process.** If anything, perhaps **SPECIFIC INDIVIDUALS** can be asked to work **SOLELY ON RE-DESIGNING** the site **BEFORE NOVEMBER 4** to make it look better. I do not currently have **ENOUGH EXPERIENCE** to re-design the website on **MY OWN**.

Each team is going to need in-the-field **EDITING** equipment, most likely compatible with what we have here. This means that in-the-field LAPTOPS must be equipped with both Avid and Adobe to **FUNCTION PROPERLY & SUSTAINABLY**. These need to necessary software loaded & supported **EFFICIENTLY PRIOR TO DEPARTURE**. They also need to be student-friendly in the sense that there **ARE NO ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS** to the uploading & maintenance of said equipment. Each editing suite needs to be equipped with an **EXTERNAL DRIVE.**

Each team is going to need in-the-field **RESEARCHING** equipment, i.e., in the form of **SEPARATE LAPTOPS** which are dedicated to Internet-use **ONLY**. They are going to need **AT LEAST THREE OF THESE**. These can be **INDIVIDUAL'S LAPTOPS** as well.

Each team will need **ACCESS** to **REPORTING GEAR** (cameras, recorders, etc.) **WHICH THEY WILL KNOW HOW TO USE AFTER ATTENDING THE TRAINING SESSION.**

Each team will need to have access to **COMMUNICATION TOOLS** such as cell phones, Blackberries, iPods, etc. This type of technology can be provided **BY THE INDIVIDUAL**, not through the Department.

Once again, the technical support group for each team will help to organize and maintain the equipment both **PRIOR TO DEPARTURE** and **DURING THE COVERAGE.**

PRE-ELECTION WARM-UP:
As part of the process of getting familiar with 2008 Election Coverage, members of each team **MUST COMPLETE WARM-UP COVERAGE** to be used on the TMN Website and individual media sites. Each team member will report on a story **RELEVANT TO THE ELECTIONS** that can be completed **HERE IN KIRKSVILLE**. These collaborative projects can include anything such as focusing on student political groups, analyzing the process of a Convention delegate, looking at the travel-patterns of both McCain and Obama and how that relates to Kirksville, etc.

Each team will pick a **FOCUS** for their **COLLABORATIVE PROJECT** in coordination with the Collaborative Coordinator. Thusly, each team can only COMPLETE their warm-up coverage **AFTER ATTENDING THE TRAINING SESSION**.

Each team will have a **WEEK** to complete their collaborative project. The Collaborative Coordinator will help in the process of picking out a story idea and then meeting with the team during the week to see how things are going and answer questions.

The schedule for such is as follows:
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2008 (TRAINING FOR ST. LOUIS TEAM)
Monday, October 13, 2008 – RED TEAM begins project-planning process
Wednesday, October 15, 2008 – Red Team Idea Finalizing
Friday, October 17, 2008 – Red Team Project Update
Saturday, October 18, 2008 – Red Team Project Rough Cut
Sunday, October 19, 2008 – Red Team Project RUNS ONLINE
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2008 (TRAINING FOR JEFF. CITY TEAM)
Monday, October 20, 2008 – WHITE TEAM begins project-planning process
Wednesday, October 22, 2008 – White Team Idea Finalizing
Friday, October 24, 2008 – White Team Project Update
Saturday, October 25, 2008 – White Team Project Rough Cut
Sunday, October 26, 2008 – White Team Project RUNS ONLINE
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2008 (TRAINING FOR KIRKSVILLE TEAM)
Monday, October 27, 2008 – BLUE TEAM begins project-planning process
Wednesday, October 29, 2008 – Red Team Idea Finalizing
Friday, October 31, 2008 – Red Team Project Update
Saturday, November 1, 2008 – Red Team Project Rough Cut
Sunday, November 2, 2008 – Red Team Project RUNS ONLINE

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT BUDGET: On Monday, October 6, 2008, both Dr. Smith and Dr. Yaquinto will be meeting with Dr. Clark to discuss the **BUDGET FOR ELECTION COVERAGE. This means that they will NEED ALL OF THE IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGY BY AT LEAST SUNDAY EVENING.** The above-mentioned list will definitely serve as necessary in the process. Dr. Clark will then decide upon the budget and how much money the Department is willing to provide for the Coverage and the necessary arrangements.

IMPORTANT DATES:
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2008 (TRAINING FOR ST. LOUIS TEAM)
Monday, October 13, 2008 – RED TEAM begins project-planning process
Wednesday, October 15, 2008 – Red Team Idea Finalizing/ Third Presidential Debate
Friday, October 17, 2008 – Red Team Project Update
Saturday, October 18, 2008 – Red Team Project Rough Cut
Sunday, October 19, 2008 – Red Team Project Report Due
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2008 (TRAINING FOR JEFF. CITY TEAM)
Monday, October 20, 2008 – WHITE TEAM begins project-planning process
Tuesday, October 21, 2008 – Candidates Forum @ Al-Khadir Shrine Club
Wednesday, October 22, 2008 – White Team Idea Finalizing
Friday, October 24, 2008 – White Team Project Update
Saturday, October 25, 2008 – White Team Project Rough Cut
Sunday, October 26, 2008 – White Team Project Report Due
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2008 (TRAINING FOR KIRKSVILLE TEAM)
Monday, October 27, 2008 – BLUE TEAM begins project-planning process
Tuesday, October 28, 2008 – District 9 Debate @ Baldwin Hall
Wednesday, October 29, 2008 – Red Team Idea Finalizing
Friday, October 31, 2008 – Red Team Project Update
Saturday, November 1, 2008 – Red Team Project Rough Cut
Sunday, November 2, 2008 – Red Team Project Report

Monday, November 3, 2008 – **RED & WHITE TEAMS** depart Kirksville
        Arrive at specific location
        Find footing in terms of accommodation and/or logistics, etc.
        AT LEAST 1 blog entry, slideshow uploaded to TMN
        Provide **AT LEAST** 1 KTRM Live-Broadcast Update that evening
Tuesday, November 4, 2008 – **TEAMS COVER THE ELECTION**
        Coverage will be placed **ONLINE** throughout the day
        The **BULK** of the coverage is obviously **TODAY**
        Teams provide **AT LEAST** 1 KTRM Live-Broadcast update before 4:00PM
        Regular KTRM Live-Broadcast updates **ON-THE-HOUR** after 5:00PM
        Regular blog updates (**AT LEAST** 1 per hour)
        Regular photo updates (**AT LEAST** a slideshow of minimum 5 photos per 2-3 hours)
        Regular print updates (**AT LEAST** 1 new print story per team per 1-2 hours)
        Regular audio updates (**AT LEAST** 1 package per team per 1-2 hours)
        Regular video updates (**AT LEAST** 1 package per team per 1-2 hours)