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Cal Poly Journalism Professors Win Best Paper Award at International Conference

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Cal Poly journalism professors Bill Loving and Brady Teufel won the Best Paper Award for a paper they co-authored and presented at the recent Organization of Social Science and Behavioral Research International Conference held in Las Vegas, Nev.

The paper, titled "Forum Selection in Social Media," focuses on the influence of social media on libel law. The award went to the paper that received the most votes by conference participants. The paper is eligible for publication in the Journal of Social Sciences Research.

The paper points out that people around the world are using technology to communicate with one another with unprecedented ease and that Internet-enabled devices, such as computers and smart phones, can convey information rapidly and globally at the touch of a button. This increased proliferation of digital communication, however, brings with it a new set of problems, especially when citizens engaged in civic discourse use digital technology to intentionally harm another person's reputation.

Loving and Teufel's research makes clear that while libel and defamation were once confined to printed works, they've been set free in cyberspace.

"I was pleasantly surprised to find out that we had earned the best paper award, since there were many other informative presentations," Teufel said. "While our paper topic is mostly aligned with journalism, it also bridges the gaps between a variety of disciplines such as social science, journalism, law, communication studies, sociology and related areas."

Harvey Levenson, interim chair of Cal Poly's Journalism Department, said, "The type of research and intellectual discourse practiced by professors Loving and Teufel is elevating Cal Poly's Journalism Department to national recognition. Their research, stemming from practical and research experience, and Cal Poly's Learn by Doing pedagogy, represents a model for new journalism scholars wanting to add to the profession's literature."

About Cal Poly's Journalism Department

Cal Poly's Journalism Department (<http://cla.calpoly.edu/jour.html>) offers a professional program leading to a Bachelor of Science degree in journalism with emphases in broadcasting, multimedia, news-editorial and public relations. Journalism majors serve as staff members of departmental communications media, including the Mustang Daily, the student newspaper; CCPR, the student-run public relations firm; KCPR, the FM-stereo radio station; and the news and programming operations of CPTV, Cal Poly's TV station. The department also sponsors student chapters of the Society of Professional Journalists, Radio-Television News Directors Association, and

the Public Relations Student Society of America. The department has thousands of alumni, many holding influential positions in print, broadcast, and public relations journalism for state and national organizations.

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