ASJMC INSIGHTS

Autumn 2013

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Life for Public Relations Professionals

By Felicia LeDuff Harry

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Guest Column

NEW TECHNOLOGIES SIMPLIFY AND COMPLICATE LIFE FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS PROFESSIONALS

By Felicia LeDuff Harry, Nicholls State University

Fifty years ago, a national food company introduced a children's cereal with the word "Cap'n" in its name and a caricature of a man with a maritime-type hat and military style jacket on the box. Given the time period, I would assume the introduction of the new cereal was accomplished via an advertising campaign aimed primarily at young children. You may remember the practice of inserting advertisements for sugary cereals and toys during the traditional Saturday morning cartoons.

This was before terms like "branding," "reputation management," and "targeted audiences" were part of our lexicon. It was also before the lines between advertising, public relations and marketing blurred.

If you'll excuse the pun, the cereal seems to have enjoyed smooth sailing for all those years, because the company now makes six varieties and has just added a line of "Cap'n" snacks.

Recently, however, the uniform worn by the caricature became headline news when a food blogger noticed that the stripes on the sleeve were those of a "commander," not a captain's. The company was accused of "fibbing" and misrepresenting its iconic character. I am sure the public relations department was kept busy trying to answer the accusations.

Fortunately, the "Cap'n" had already entered cyberspace with a YouTube program, which gave the company direct access to its target audience and a means to respond immediately. The company was forced, in a way, to defend the number of stripes it used on a caricature's uniform, all because a blogger's comment was picked up by news organizations.

To me, this is a prime example of how something seemingly frivolous becomes news and challenges a company to divert its public relations efforts to deal with such issues. There are more serious examples where public relations professionals have been called upon to do damage control, such as when something disastrous happens.

About two years ago, an oil well exploded in the Gulf of Mexico. Almost immediately, news of the explosion and the deaths resulting from it spread around the world. The company, an international, large oil-producing one, was called to task about the circumstances around the explosion and its consequences, especially environmental ones. The burst well spewed oil into the Gulf for months, while the company tried to figure out how to cap it. People who were directly affected (media, in particular) wanted to see and hear the company's "head man" on the scene. I think they were looking for some sign of human concern or for some face to put on the disaster, wanting and needing solace that the company cared, or maybe they just needed a sound bite.

A few weeks after the explosion, the CEO arrived in the United States. The media followed him around, shouting questions at his every turn. In response to one question, the CEO said that he was ready for the situation to be over, so he could get back to "his life" and as those who had been affected could get back to theirs. I imagine, at that moment, his public relations personnel cringed. Why did he say that? As things turned out, the CEO's "life" included yacht races while those who had been affected were having their livelihoods threatened. The media had a heyday, making the CEO look like a disconnected and unconcerned rich guy. The remark can still be viewed today, years later, on the Internet. Ultimately, the damage from the remarks could not be repaired and the CEO lost his job. It was a case that showed public relations professionals about the lack of control over CEOs and other corporate personnel and the risks associated with "off the cuff" remarks—and the long-lasting nature of the Internet.

I use these two examples to show the wide spectrum of issues that may confront public relations professionals on a daily basis. One day they could be sitting in an office creating an online presence for a caricature when one comment by a blogger or an explosion can change their whole perspective.

The Internet, while it has provided public relations professionals new and somewhat unfiltered access to audiences, has also brought new challenges. Some events and circumstances have brought public relations, or the need for good public relations, to the forefront of corporate activity.

In this age of instant communication and information overload, corporations have been called upon to provide accurate and detailed accounts of corporate activity, whether or not it's good news or even serious news. Consumers are demanding and have resources to fact check companies and also resources to share their findings. Companies have learned the value of consistent messages, and they are taking advantage of their own resources and fusing public relations tactics with advertising campaigns and marketing strategies. Three distinctive functions have been merged into a singular corporate function, where the goals and objectives include not only selling products or services, but also selling the company and maintaining its reputation.

Felicia LeDuff Harry is an associate professor of Mass Communication at Nicholls State University and head of the public relations concentration at the institution.

ELECTRONIC MULTITASKING IN THE CLASSROOM: DOES IT HELP OR HURT?

By Raul Reis, Florida International University

Everyone who has taught a college class in the past five years has grappled with this dilemma: Should we allow students to use smartphones, laptops or any other portable devices during lectures? Are those devices and their classroom use just nuisances that get in the way of the learning process? Or, since the use of those devices comes so naturally to the "millennial generation," can instructors use them effectively in the classroom to engage students and help them learn the material?

That dilemma is even more pressing for mass communication instructors. As we prepare our students to be highly proficient in multimedia production and effective professional users of social media, should we embrace the use of electronic devices in the classroom, and essentially "practice what we preach"; or should we instead keep electronic multitasking at bay, for fear that our lectures are falling on deaf ears?

A quick search on Google Scholar for illuminating studies in this area produces results that run the gamut from (a) "cyber-slacking" in the classroom is widespread and harmful, the equivalent of channel surfing during lectures; to (z) multitasking develops the individual's ability to learn the material, even if the lecture becomes background noise. Most studies, however, fall somewhere in between, with some empirical evidence indicating that if used intentionally and properly by the instructor, electronic multitasking can indeed become an ally, an effective tool in the learning process.

Some academic studies have used surveys, experiments and other research tools to assess how much students learn if they are multitasking electronically during class. A study done by Hembroke and Gay at Cornell University divided students into two groups—half of them were allowed to keep their laptops open during class (their laptop use was unrestricted and unmonitored); and the other half were not allowed to use their computers during the lecture. Students took a 20-question quiz (10 multiple-choice, 10 short essay) right after the lecture. As hypothesized by the researchers, students in the open laptop group performed "significantly poorer" than those in the closed laptop group.

A similar, more recent, study conducted by Eileen Wood et al. with 145 students at a large Canadian university seemed to confirm those results—students who were only allowed to take notes (with paper-and-pencil *or* laptops) during lectures outperformed students who were allowed to text, e-mail, IM, or use Facebook during class. Performance was measured by a 15-item multiple-choice test administered to all students after the lecture. According to the study, students who used Facebook and IM performed even worse than students who were *only* allowed to text and e-mail.

A different study, done by Kraushaar and Novak at the University of Vermont, also monitored the *type* of computer use done by the "laptop-open" students, with the help of *spyware* installed on the computers to track their usage. In this case, multitasking activities were divided into *productive* (class-related) and *distractive* (non class-related). The authors found that students engaged in substantial multitasking activities during class, with non class-related software being used 42% of the time. The authors also found a "significant inverse relationship" between academic performance and *distractive* electronic multitasking during class.

Fewer studies were found on the effects of electronic multitasking when it is intentionally used in the classroom to engage students with the material. However, a quick survey of the mass communication faculty at Florida International University, a large (48,000 students), public research university in Miami, found that many of them are indeed embracing electronic multitasking, and trying to engage students with the help of their portable devices.

"Journalism students can certainly use smart devices in the classroom, especially when the classroom simulates a newsroom," said Allan Richards, who teaches an advanced multimedia production class. "Twitter, Facebook, Storify can contribute to student research, reporting, even class discussions, when it comes to watching a story unfold and analyzing the way different media organizations respond to it."

Michael Sheerin, who teaches visual communication, among other classes, echoed Richards' view. "I embrace it when it is pertinent to the discussion or topic. All my classes are at least hybrid, so all the information I give out is digitally formatted. In order for them to access it, they need to be plugged in—or watch the big screen at the front of the class."

"However," Sheerin added, "I'm not naïve enough to think that they are all following along with that content only. At times, I do require devices to be turned off, and they usually comply with this request."

Faculty in advertising and public relations are also embracing electronic multitasking in the classroom. Grizelle De Los Reyes, an FIU advertising instructor, has incorporated Facebook widely into her classes, and wants students to post comments and start discussions on the course's Facebook page *in real time*, as they learn new concepts and ideas. She also requires students to follow her on Twitter, so that "any time, any day" can become an opportunity to teach/learn.

Sigal Segev, also an advertising professor at FIU, has a more skeptical approach to multitasking in the classroom. While embracing smart devices "when they serve a purpose in the class and facilitate the learning experience," she is also very mindful of the fact that learning new material "requires focus and attention." In her opinion, it requires students to be *active listeners*, using their critical thinking and reasoning skills to connect new concepts to ideas they have previously learned.

However, Segev added, using their electronic devices also requires students to be active, in the sense of paying attention to the content and information at hand.

"I often find that when students use smart devices, they do so to read e-mails, chat with friends, or deal with material that is non course-related. These are not the students who will stop me to ask an intelligent question, ask for clarification, or enrich the class with a great comment or insight. They are simply too busy with other things."

Raul Reis is dean of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Florida International University.

ACADEMIC RENEWAL IN THE HOWARD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS: SCHOLARS OUTLINE PROCESS USED TO RESHAPE CURRICULUM

By Jannette L. Dates, Chuka Onwumechili, Gracie Lawson-Borders, Bishetta Merritt, and Rochelle Ford, Howard University

Background

For years, leaders in communications education in higher education called for curriculum reform.[1] Because of a fiscal crisis in the nation and beyond, in the early 2000's many colleges and universities began to plan more aggressively for the re-organization of their programs. For the most part, universities planned to apply savings from reorganizing to: (a) create more efficient and academically sound units and (b) cut budgets.[2] They also embarked on reform to improve preparation of students to meet labor market needs and create a more nimble and innovative curriculum.[3]

In his research, R.C. Dickeson focuses on the forces that propel academic reform in higher education that include internal and external pressures. Internal pressures for reform emerge from colleges and universities that are striving to accomplish four things: (a) increase revenues; (b) decrease expenses; (c) improve quality; and (d) strengthen reputation. Dickeson notes that these latter two objectives are perceived by faculty and staff as incompatible with the cost-cutting objective; however, they are unconditionally crucial to increase revenues, he argues. Further, he notes that the education system in the United States traditionally has been free of external pressures. However, external reports that evaluate higher education have recently and increasingly become the source of external pressures on higher education. In the past 50 years, Dickeson notes, the federal government began to invest more into higher education and was requesting more information about how its funds were spent. He believes that recently there has been a strong case for reform in higher education, despite the competing demands that prevent efficient reforms from occurring that include: overblown marketing, runaway specialization, unhealthy internal competition, the money trap, disconnected planning and faculty resistance.[4]

Few articles about reorganization in higher education focus on the process used by faculty members to plan for and implement changes in their curricula. Recent studies reveal that reported reforms were largely in the areas of introducing technology and diversity to curricula.[5] Our report is unique in that we do not primarily focus on the introduction of technology and diversity into the curriculum, although they each figure in the urgency of the faculty's desire for change. We report here the step-by-step process that was used to complete the transformation of the curriculum and programs in the School of Communications at Howard University.

In his work, Dickeson makes the case that in order to reconcile competing demands, universities need to have program-by-program reviews of all academic offerings, along with a consideration of institutional culture and leadership.[6] Howard University did just that. We begin our report with the university's program review procedures.

University-wide Program Review: Academic Renewal

In 2007, the Howard University Board of Trustees approved the development and implementation of a university-wide academic excellence initiative that included strategic program reviews and assessments. The initiative was built around organizational capacity, financial viability, sustainability, and physical facilities and services.

In 2009, the new president of the university, Dr. Sidney A. Ribeau, established a faculty-led Presidential Commission on Academic Renewal (PCAR). Headed by Interim Provost Alvin Thornton, PCAR established the framework for degree program evaluations and recommendations for each of the programs offered across the University. The goal was in keeping with Howard's mission, legacy and vision, and the plan was to use the gathered information as the basis for decision-making. The President defined Academic Renewal as a process that would help define the future and shape the university while accomplishing specific objectives.

In 2010, PCAR recommended a series of university-wide enhancements and program-specific mergers, transformations, additions and eliminations. By January 2011, the university had completed more than three years of intensive self-study, including preparation for reaffirmation of accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and the review of each of its degree programs by the University's Presidential Commission on Academic Renewal. The goal: to reaffirm the university's commitment to strengthening its position as a leading research university. The University urged everyone to accept the need for assessment and reorganization in order to assure that all programs could provide a high-quality learning experience for students within a framework of academic excellence and financial sustainability. In 2011, the Board of Trustees approved the president's plan for Academic Renewal that would position Howard University for the future.[7]

As Dickeson and others observe, reform in higher education must take place despite competing demands that prevent efficient reforms from occurring. Mindful of this, readers will see next how the leaders in the School of Communications worked around these obvious roadblocks.[8]

The Role of the School of Communications in the University's Academic Renewal

In 2011, the University directed all schools and colleges to review their programs and to plan for obtaining-best-in class status. Following this directive, the School of Communications continued on the path it had begun in 2007, when the Board of Trustees had urged each school/college to strategically focus on academic excellence. In 2007-08, each department in the School of Communications had been charged by the Dean to assess and evaluate its curriculum and delivery systems and prepare recommendations for how they would revise and reorganize their programs—based on the newest trends in their disciplines and based on the benchmark programs they aspired to be like.[9]

During AY 2008-09, the School undertook an introspective review of what excellence meant in 21st Century schools of communications. Faculty leaders helped define who they were, what they wanted to be known as, what their core values were — and how they chose to commit themselves as responsible leaders helping to move the School firmly toward the excellence they had defined. The faculty worked to ensure that each faculty member would understand what excellence meant in their departments. As they developed matrices to measure quality, each department defined criteria for its faculty members in a manner that was in line with the School's University-approved criteria for appointments, reappointments, promotions and tenure and the University's Faculty Handbook.[10]

During AY 2009-10 and 2010-11, each department continued to have meetings to define excellence and to plan strategies for helping to move the School toward again being viewed as an internationally recognized intellectual powerhouse in communications. Those definitions and strategies were then taken to the school-wide faculty where they were approved and embraced.

The University also directed each school/ college to develop rubrics for assessing and measuring faculty adherence to meeting standards of excellence. To develop the rubrics required by the University, the School used ideas generated from its 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 deliberations for defining excellence and for planning ways to achieve the goals in each sequence in each department.

Because of the work it had begun in 2007 that focused on excellence within each department and the rubrics developed for assessing program quality with measureable standards, the School was prepared in 2009-10 and 2010-11 for the requests made by the President's Commission on Academic Renewal.

Thus, in the 2011 spring semester, the School undertook and completed the following actions:

- The Dean, Associate Dean, Chairs and Directors reviewed the Academic Renewal plans affecting the School.
- Each department/unit developed drafts of department-specific Academic Renewal plans.
- A few individuals developed and submitted their ideas for Academic Renewal.
- The School-wide Curriculum Committee reviewed the submitted Academic Renewal plans, consolidated ideas and made recommendations for further consideration, passing their recommendations on to the SW Executive Committee.

• The SW Executive Committee reviewed the plans and made recommendations for the School's review.
• The faculty reviewed the preliminary report from the Blue Ribbon Panel.
• A school-wide committee (Committee on the Future of the School)[11] met to develop one coherent plan culled from the different reports and recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Panel (see Appendix 3) and COMPASS recommendations (see Appendix 2), as well as from the reports, recommendations, expertise and experiences of the School's faculty.
• The Committee on the Future of the School made a comprehensive set of recommendations to the full faculty to be reviewed during AY 2011-12. (See Appendix 1.)
• On December 8, 2011, the faculty unanimously approved the recommendations of the Committee on the Future for the reorganization of the School.[12]
• The plans for reorganizing the School of Communications were forwarded by the Dean to the Provost and President. Key highlights of the plan included the following:
  • Reduce the number of undergraduate departments in the school from four to two, re-organizing the programs to include the following:
    • Department of Media, Journalism & Film
    • Department of Strategic, Legal & Management Communications
  • Reduce the number of graduate programs in the school from four to three departments:
    • Department of Communication Culture & Media Studies
    • Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders
    • MFA in Film Program

The Role of External Parties in the Reorganization of the School

The CCOPASS Strategic Plan

In the 2010 spring semester COMPASS worked with the School on a strategic plan[13] that identified and prioritized concrete goals for achieving the School's vision and to offered prescriptive recommendations with sequencing of these recommendations to guide the School's implementation of the strategic plan. When the strategic plan was completed, within the report, COMPASS made the following summarized recommendations:

• Re-organize the Board and develop it to assist the School in broader and deeper ways
• Engage alumni to assist the School more fully
• Upgrade the School's infrastructure
• Hire a team of fundraising experts to support the work of the Dean
• Re-brand the School for increased visibility and viability

The School expressed deep gratitude to the team members of COMPASS for their work in strategic planning. It is estimated that the cost of a report such as the one they completed for the School would have been in excess of $100,000.

The McCormick Foundation and the Blue Ribbon Panel

In the 2010 fall semester, the Provost and the Dean conferred with Clark Bell, director of Journalism Programs at the McCormick Foundation, to request a revised use of some of the funds donated to the School by McCormick. The School requested permission to use a portion of the funds to support convening of a Blue Ribbon Panel that would review, assess and make recommendations for the reorganization of programs in the School. Permission was granted and Bell agreed to serve as a member of the panel.

The Blue Ribbon Panel met in-person twice (May 7, 2011, and July 15, 2011). Between the two in-person meetings, using their considerable expertise and the materials developed by various School of Communications faculty groups, each committee met 5-6 times by telephone conference calls and emails to prepare their report.[14]

The Panel's report offered detailed observations about actions the school needed to take to obtain transformational change.[15]

The Role of the Faculty in Planning for the Reorganization of the School

During its spring 2011 meeting, based on the continuing conversations the faculty had been having on this subject beginning in 2007, faculty members offered suggestions regarding the reorganization of the School and reviewed the Blue Ribbon Panel Report and the COMPASS preliminary report. A group of faculty members was convened to further plan for reorganization. The committee represented three of the undergraduate departments (Communication and Culture; Journalism; and Radio, TV, Film) and focused on the theory courses, rather than the production courses offered at that time.

The group was eager to meet the University's requirement that schools/colleges establish (reinventing themselves, if necessary) programs that were or could soon become competitive with the best programs in their fields. They convened over the summer of 2011 to focus on how to blend similar courses, create new courses, establish sequences, and name the "new" department. In deciding upon a name, the group researched programs at other Research One institutions, at schools accredited by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications and used their collective wisdom to create a name that reflected the pedagogy of the discipline and the future needs of the marketplace: Strategic, Legal and Management Communications. SLMC merged courses and sequences from Communication and Culture (legal, organizational), Journalism (advertising, public relations), and, Radio, Television and Film (Telecommunications Management). The group continued to meet periodically to refine its work.

Committee on the Future of the School

The first 2011 fall meeting of the faculty provided an opportunity for the production faculties of the Department of Journalism and the Department of Radio, Television and Film to join their colleagues (of the newly emerging SLMC Department) in the reorganization process. At this meeting, faculty members from each undergraduate program (including the proposed new SLMC program) volunteered to serve on a Committee that had as its goal to create a total reorganization plan for the School of Communications under the leadership of the Committee on the Future.

The COF defined the "student of the future" stating the characteristics and knowledge base a student who graduates from the School of Communications should possess. One of the members of the proposed SLMC Department provided the framework (utilized by SLMC) from which the production programs could develop their departmental goal, rationale and curricula. The framework was used to also outline benefits to students, the School and the University. The Committee selected the courses that would constitute the departmental core classes, and electives in addition to the courses that would comprise the various new sequences.

A difficult step in this process was agreeing on a name for this new (production-focused) department. Finally, the title the Department of Media, Journalism, and Film was selected as the new name. In the new schemes, the sequences are radio/audio production, digital film and video production, and journalism (one sequence with options for electives). The next critical task was to select the School of Communications core courses—classes all students would have to complete. The committee asked: what body of knowledge is essential for all students to take regardless of department or major? These deliberations took considerable time and the best thinking, but, with research garnered from similar programs at other universities and School of Communications faculty input, the Committee selected a set of courses that would provide the required skill set.

The Committee added an Interdisciplinary Studies major to the undergraduate program to allow an opportunity for those students who wished to pursue broader areas of study to do so. As a part of Academic Renewal, in 2011 the undergraduate major in Communication Sciences and Disorders was closed by the University, but the school was allowed to retain the undergraduate minor. The Communication Sciences and Disorders courses offered as a minor within the Interdisciplinary Studies program also gave an opportunity for students to broaden their educational and employment options.

In the faculty meeting on December 8, 2011, the Committee made its presentation to the entire faculty of the School of Communications with the reorganization charts that included a new structure for the School, and the Howard University required courses, the School core, and the core courses for the two new departments. The faculty voted unanimously to accept the reorganization structure and to have the Committee continue its work. The faculty asked the Dean to forward the decision and recommendation to upper administration so that the reorganization could begin for the implementation of the revised curriculum in the 2013 fall semester.

Faculty committees were formed in May 2012 to work over the summer to address implementation plans, make decisions regarding the recruitment of students, faculty and administrators, and to revise the Appointment, Promotion and Tenure guidelines. As a result of this process, the committee created definitions of the characteristics for the new department chairs, developed position descriptions for new faculty and admission criteria for incoming students and students eligible to major in Interdisciplinary Studies. Drafts of the new curricula, with learning outcomes, were presented to the faculty and approved.

Individual faculty members made decisions regarding which department they planned to join. Some faculty members planned to teach across departments until all the new courses were introduced, and (with the University urging the elimination of "silos") to create team teaching opportunities, and opportunities for teaching across disciplines. Some faculty members planned to continue to teach across departments indefinitely.

The Committee for the Future set up some faculty bonding activities for members of the merging departments. Designed to assist faculty members in learning more about colleagues from the other departments and reduce any tensions that might arise with the reorganization, the activities proved to be fun and productive. Additional such experiences were planned for the future.

The School of Communications' administration and faculty were delighted when, on September 28, 2012, the Howard University Board of Trustees approved the plans for the reorganization of the School of Communications, with the new curriculum scheduled to begin in the 2013 fall semester.

At the same time, the University's General Studies Committee was completing its plans for a "common experience" for all students entering the University. Beginning in the Fall 2013 semester, all first year students would be required to take the same set of courses during the first year and move to their majors as sophomores. Once the University's General Studies Committee made its final decisions, the faculty would readjust major requirements (if necessary), finalize course content, write syllabi, and complete preparations for teaching the new curricula.

The faculty members in the School were excited about making the changes in their program and worked together to design a smooth transition for the 2013 fall semester. Thus, in the 2013 spring semester, the School's website and registration materials reflected the reorganized programs (with new titles) for the students who were registering for the 2013 Fall Semester.

One of the recommendations made by the COMPASS team in their 2012 recommendations and by the Blue Ribbon Panel in their 2011 report included a plan for Board of Visitors (BOV) development. In the 2012 fall semester, Dean Emerita Dates and Interim Dean Onwumechili, working in conjunction with Provost Frederick, submitted a proposal —for Board of Visitors development— to COMPASS to obtain additional support for board development strategies. COMPASS accepted the proposal, and in partnership with COMPASS, Booz Allen Hamilton allowed 9 of its senior management staff to serve as team members for designing BOV development strategies for the school.[16]

During this period, the nation-wide search for a new Dean for the school culminated in the appointment of Dr. Gracie Lawson-Borders as the Dean. Dean Lawson-Borders embraced the ideas for reorganization and curriculum re-design, and she embraced the support of Booz Allen Hamilton/ COMPASS in helping the school design Board of Visitors development strategies.

Summary and Discussion

Why did the University and School experience success in moving forward toward total reorganization of its curriculum and programs, when usually there is too much dissention and turmoil around such an undertaking? We believe there were factors that worked favorably for the school which include the following:

(a) The faculty had become deeply involved in thinking about reorganization and about how they wanted to define and implement excellence across their programs, starting in 2007.
(b) In 2008, when the President instituted the plan for academic renewal, the faculty became energized about using their ideas for addressing the president's renewal plan. Therefore, the University's plans for academic renewal gave the School the needed impetus to focus on reorganizing its programs to be more in tune with 21st century ideas for schools of communication.
(c) In 2011, the faculty's ideas were shared with the Compass Team and the Blue Ribbon Panel—so that it was clear to those external organizations about the directions of the internal (the faculty's) thinking.
(d) The Compass and the Blue Ribbon Panel teams brought outstanding expertise and experience to the project. Thus, they were quickly able to shape the direction of their reports.
(e) The faculty used the reports from the two teams to solidify its own plan of action that was forwarded to the Provost and President for approval and subsequent review and approval by the Board of Trustees.
(f) The flexibility of the McCormick Foundation –that allowed the School to use McCormick-donated funds in a different manner than had been originally planned – gave the School a significant opportunity to develop plans for its future in a professionally sound manner.
(g) Because he brought experience and expertise to the Blue Ribbon Panel Committee on which he served that gave the group significant insights, having McCormick's program director engaged in the process of assessment

and strategic planning within the Blue Ribbon Panel was an additional bonus for the School.

(h) In the middle of the School's review of ideas for reorganization, the leading funding sources for communications programs (Knight Foundation, McCormick Foundation, Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation, Scripps Howard Foundation and others) announced that "journalism and communication schools must be willing to recreate themselves if they are to succeed in playing vital roles as new creators and innovators"[17] and they stated that they would no longer support programs that refused to do so.

In a relatively short period of time, the faculty had planned for the reorganization of its curriculum and programs, obtained permission from the board to officially offer its revised programs and curriculum and planned to begin implementation strategies for the new program. Thus, beginning in the 2013 spring semester, the students who enrolled in the school as freshmen for the 2013 fall semester were enrolling in the newly configured program. Of course, there were many kinks to be worked out over time, but the faculty, staff and students were excited about the school's movement in a new direction as it embraced new technology and a converging media landscape, with a focus on entrepreneurship and innovation.

Moving Forward

The School of Communications at Howard University is poised to start the next chapter in its storied legacy. The changes in the undergraduate and graduate programs are the catalyst to a promising future. The School has chosen to advance in a proactive way for students, faculty and staff. The 21st Century has brought profound changes to our professional and personal lives through advancements in emerging digital technologies. We want to prepare our students to meet the evolving digital world. The School and Howard's university wide academic excellence and institutional initiatives provide a foundation for moving forward in a progressive, planned and effective process. The School has a legacy of leadership and participation, and there are national and global changes we face as we engage students to become innovative leaders in the future.

The School's future during the next one to three years is centered on five transformative areas on which the Dean, administrators, faculty and students will focus their attention. Reorganization of the undergraduate programs sets the stage for what the school seeks to pursue. The 120 credit-hour curriculum will emphasize digital communication, interdisciplinary exploration, entrepreneurial thinking, hands-on experience, international and intercultural opportunities and internships. We are charged with ensuring that every enrolled student can successfully navigate the curriculum for completion of their degrees.

Faculty growth and development is a priority for a future built on the experience and expertise of existing faculty and the potential and promise of newly recruited faculty. We will follow an active recruiting philosophy in which we look at our strengths and build on those strengths to define the needs of the School for the future. Fundraising is integral for the continued success of internal and external initiatives. School ambassadors not only include the strategic efforts of the development director and dean, but faculty, students, staff, Board of Visitors and alumni who support a bright future for the school. We must turn to alumni, donors, friends and supporters to build on the foundation that has been established — from scholarships, to a new building and new programs. School Advocacy on all levels is essential to ensure the School's prominence and visibility on campus, around the nation and across the globe. We will continue to seek internal and external resources to support, maintain and implement efforts for success. We will capitalize on the school's strengths from student work at WHBC-AM radio and the PBS affiliate WHUT. The doctoral programs in the School are a foundation of research and teaching that reach beyond the campus. The Speech and Hearing Clinic solidifies our ties to serving the community. The Annenberg Honors Program, the CERRC program, and other auxiliary programs expand the world of opportunities for students.

Recruitment and Retention are the keys to our continued success. The strength of the School is premised on students and alumni who enter and leave Howard University transformed by their experience. Active recruitment and retention of students is essential. Participation in recruitment efforts on and off campus help set the stage for success. From Social Media to college nights and high school visits, the goal is to remain active and engaged with students. We follow a call to *educate, excite and engage* our students. We view recruitment and retention as premised on the ability to work collaboratively with School and university level representatives to be creative and innovative in efforts to connect to prospective and current students for the School of Communications.

In summary, we are of the opinion that despite the traditional resistance to change often seen within organizations, the school was able to move forward because the stakeholders (faculty and staff) were involved in the process over a number of years, the president of the University required schools to engage in program reviews with promised support for those that did so and penalties for those that did not, and the leading funding sources for communications programs announced that they would no longer support programs that had not done introspection about their programs and developed innovative ways to reorganize how they functioned in a converged media world. Most significantly, the McCormick Foundation gave its support at what was a critical time for the University and for the future of the School.

We hope this article offers an opportunity for others to learn about our process and benefit from our plans and procedures and that it adds to the dialogue about curriculum development and program reorganization strategies in higher education today.

Jannette L. Dates was Dean in the School of Communications from June 1993–January 2012. Chuka Onwumechili served as Interim Dean in the School of Communications from January 2012–July 2013. Gracie Lawson-Borders began serving as Dean of the School of Communications in July 2013. Bishetta Merritt was Chair of the Department of Radio, Television & Film from 1991–1999, became Interim Chair for AY's 2011–13 and chaired the Committee on the Future of the School during AY 2011–12 and 2012–13. Rochelle Ford served as the Associate Dean for Research and Academic Affairs in the School from 2008- present.

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11. Committee on the Future of the School: Chair, Dr. Bishetta Merritt, Members, Dr. Paula Matabane, Ms. Montre Missouri, Mr. Craig Herndon, Dr. Debyii Sabubu-Thomas, Dr. Laura Fleet, Dr. Lawrence Kaggwa, Mr. Riginald Miles

12. See Appendix 1. Report on the Future Academic Programs and Structure in the School of Communications

13. See the complete Compass Report in Appendix 2. COMPASS Team Members included: Project Leader- Carl Grossman, President, Craftsman, Inc,, Deputy Project Leader- Benjamin Jarvis, Associate, Booz, Allen, Hamilton, Nicholas Graham, former Senior Manager, Kaiser Associates (MBA Candidate, Columbia Business School); Charles Bingham, former Associate Arnold Porter, LLP (Advisor, Department of Interior); Cecily S. Habimana, Development Associate, Atlas Performing Arts Center; Lauren Kinsey, Manager of Cause Marketing, Brand Leadership, United Way Worldwide; and Drew McManigle, Principal-Founder, The McManigle Company. The Compass Report noted that the School's strengths include:

- Strong commitment to success
- Knowledgeable and committed staff
- Access to an active Board of Visitors with strong ties to the communications industry
- Active alumni—from a post-graduate placement perspective

• Reputation as a leading School of Communications
• Location
• Affordability
• Status as one of the prestigious Historically Black Colleges /Universities (HBCU's).

The School's weaknesses include:
• Opportunity to better define vision and mission
• Board development (namely the opportunity for a more functional and strategic Board)
• Marketing and branding opportunities
• High degrees of bureaucracy, hampering SOC's progress
• Poor facilities, including a lack of classroom space
• Insufficient technology and equipment
• Disconnect between Board of Visitors (BOV) and administration, and the Howard School of Communication and HU administration's Office of Advancement
• Insufficient staff to support key initiatives (e.g. BOV, fundraising).

14. See the complete report of the Blue Ribbon Panel in Appendix 3. Tina Young of QCM Consulting served as the facilitator for the Panel. The members included: (a) TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE—Chair Bonita Stewart, VP US Sales, Google Inc and SOC alumna.; Matt Snider EVP at Technet; Steve Geimann, Editor, Bloomberg News; Karen Dunlap Brown, President, Poynter Institute; Carl Grossman, President, Craftsman Press, Jim Watkins, HU alumnus and GM, WHUR-FM and WHUR World; Carl Grossman, COMPASS Leader; (b) CURRICULUM COMMITTEE—Chair Barbara Cochran, Missouri SOJ; Susanne Shaw, Executive Director Accrediting Council in Journalism & Mass Communications; Sharon Moss, SOC alumna and Specialist DOVA; Paul Voakes, former Dean SOJMC, U. Colorado; Clark Bell, Director of Journalism Programs McCormick Foundation; (c) OUTREACH/FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE—Chair Torod Neptune, VP Verizon; Ron Culp, Founder, Culp & Co.; Charles Firestone, Executive Director, Aspen Institute Communications & Society Program; David Boardman, Executive Editor and SVP, Seattle Times; Cornell Moore, Partner- Dorsey and Whitney, LLP; and Chair of the School of Communications Board of Visitors, and Ben Jarvis, COMPASS Deputy Leader.

15. The Blue Ribbon Panel recommended that the School: (1) Establish a new undergraduate curriculum with two undergraduate departments instead of four, (2) Offer a news/media literacy course as a university-wide service course, (3) Establish a professional Master's Degree program, (4) Monitor current industry trends, (5) Design infrastructure to support the future, (6) Be aware of technology-based curriculum needs. (7) Equip students and faculty with tools for enhanced learning, (8) Develop and execute an international HU SOC brand and communications strategy- that is focused on new "Best in Class" programs, faculty, corporate & community partnerships and relationships, (9) Reframe the focus of the new Dean's role to support outreach & fundraising, and recognize staffing needs to support desired fundraising and outreach goals, and (10) Better align university-level and school-level structure and operations for fundraising activities, and focus fundraising efforts on corporations and high-net-worth Individuals

16. The Booz Allen Hamilton executives include: Associate Ben Jarvis (Deputy Project Champion from the School's 2010-11 COMPASS team), VP Christian Foster (Project Champion),VP Julie Disandro (Deputy Project Champion,Sr. Associate Courtney Alexander, Sr. Associate Jonathan Allen,Sr. Associate Keith Hansen, Director Sheryl Jones,Sr. Associate Janeen Latini, and Sr. Associate Josette Rogers>

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The following appendices are available on the HUSOC website: APPENDIX 1: REPORT ON THE FUTURE ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND STRUCTURE IN THE SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS; **APPENDIX 2**: COMPASS REPORT; **APPENDIX 3:** BLUE RIBBON PANEL REPORT

PROGRAM ADDRESSING PROBLEMS WITH ON-HAND RESOURCES

By Karen Slattery, Marquette University

In the feature film Apollo 13, directed by Ken Howard, three astronauts are headed toward the moon in a spacecraft crippled by a mechanical problem. Back on the ground, engineers are struggling to salvage the flight and bring the crew safely home. They need to devise replacement parts for damaged spacecraft components using only the materials available to the astronauts. In one scene, engineers dump three cardboard boxes full of plastic tubes, filters, wires, duct tape and spacesuits onto a table, while a lead engineer tells the team to "listen up" because the "people upstairs handed us this one and we gotta' come through." He explains that they have to find a way to make a square replacement filter fit into a round tube using only the materials on the table. "Let's get it organized," says one engineer. "Let's build a filter," says another. "Better get some coffee going, too," adds a third.

This scene offers a good metaphor for the situation that confronts the faculty of Marquette University's Journalism and Media Studies Department. We are faced with a problem that threatens the department's future, and we must solve it with the resources at hand. A revolution in technology and a crisis in the commercial media's economic health have forced our department, like others around the country, to dramatically change the way it delivers journalism education to students. We've been forced to adjust quickly to changing circumstances, at what amounts to light speed in terms of higher education, where change often seems hopelessly slow. We have had to retool with existing resources. In this article, I will explain how faculty members who were trained in legacy media, are working to craft a curriculum that is flexible, emphasizes writing across media, trains students in multimedia storytelling techniques and at the same time honors the standards, practices and values that are at the heart of professional journalism. I will touch on the scope of the problem faced by the faculty, the resources available to effect the change, some specific steps taken to modify the curriculum, and plans for completing the process. Hopefully, the discussion will offer ideas to others across the country who find themselves in similar situations in their own journalism programs.

The Problem

As technological changes swept through the field of journalism, they posed significant challenges for the faculty in Marquette University's Journalism and Media Studies Department. The journalism program is more than a century old and is the only ACEJMC-accredited program in the Jesuit universities in North America. The faculty consists of nine full-time employees, eight on tenure tracks and one professional-in-residence. The program's primary emphasis had been on newspaper and magazine writing, reporting and editing. A photojournalism class and a magazine design class added a visual component to the print curriculum. The broadcast piece of the program was housed in another department, the result of a college merger in the 1980's. Students self-selected into print, magazine or broadcast journalism tracks; the curriculum strongly reflected traditional legacy media. The faculty members, who taught primarily print-based writing and reporting courses, had been trained at newspapers and magazines. Understanding, practicing, and teaching new media strategies required shifts in attitudes and pedagogical strategies.

At the same time, the recession added another dimension to the problem. Marquette University is a tuition-driven private institution, and the ripple effects of the recession ruled out receiving additional resources. Hiring faculty with experience in multimedia was not an option; in fact, while there was an increasing demand for faculty with new skills, the university was pressuring the department to cut back on part-time or adjunct faculty who might be adept at teaching new media skills.

The attitude of faculty independence that has permeated thinking in the academy for centuries created a third challenge. University faculty members pride themselves on academic freedom, independence, and the flexibility to pursue their own skills and research-related interests. Consensus and systematic change are difficult to achieve. While that may not be problematic in some circumstances, the changing nature of journalism and mass media has meant that our curriculum must change as well. Interdependence and cooperation assumed paramount importance.

In summary, technological advances and economic disruption in the field of journalism dated our curriculum, the nation's economic downturn caused the university to put pressure on the department to cut back on part-time faculty with multimedia experience, and the mainline faculty's ways of approaching their work as independent scholars meant that creating a new and flexible curriculum capable of accommodating the changing demands of the field was indeed going to be a challenge for our department.

Available Resources

In order to redesign the journalism curriculum, the faculty found it necessary to take careful stock of its available resources. Like the engineers brainstorming to fix a disabled Apollo 13, we knew that our assets were limited; we had to work with the resources on hand. That meant, in one case, rethinking what counts as an asset. The problem of faculty independence, noted earlier, had to be reconsidered. Rather than treat diverse faculty knowledge sets as a problem, we chose to reframe the range of experiences that the faculty could bring to the table as journalists, scholars and instructors as an important asset. This resource has played an important role in the redesign of the curriculum, as will be discussed below.

A second asset is our college's continued commitment to making cutting-edge technology available to students. This has allowed the department to acquire equipment and computer programs suitable for an instructional environment. Learning new technology, including hardware and software, places on-going demands on both faculty and student time. In addition to having the technology available, our dean, Dr. Lori Bergen, is committed to faculty training and support. Instructors who are willing and able to take on the learning of new skills have been given training and support. Our administrative leadership has made training programs available to faculty, that have included the Platypus workshop, the Newsplex workshop and training on computer programs such as Final Cut Pro and InDesign.

Two programs recently added to the college and aligned with the Journalism and Media Studies Department make up another important asset. The first program to be added was the Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service (NNS), a not-for-profit news organization created to cover news stories in the impoverished neighborhoods in the Milwaukee area, that is, the neighborhoods that are often overlooked by mainstream media with their own dwindling staffs. The NNS employs a part-time news editor and several part-time journalists. In addition to appearing on its own website, NNS stories are available for re-distribution to other news organizations in the area. The NNS offers internships to upper-division journalism students who are skilled in multi-media reporting. In its second year of existence, the NNS won a regional Murrow Award for its work.

The second program that serves as an asset is the newly created O'Brien Fellowship Program. The program was created in a partnership with the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* and has been funded by a donor to honor a family member. Next year, and in subsequent years, three reporters from around the country will come to the Marquette campus for the academic year to work on in-depth reporting on a problem of their choice. During a trial run of the program this year, Meg Kissinger, an award-winning reporter from the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* spent the year on campus covering problems related to mental health in the city. In searching for solutions to the problems, Kissinger and students flew to Belgium to report on how the mentally ill are cared for there.

Both the NNS and O'Brien programs, which afford opportunities for our students to work as interns with professional journalists, have allowed the faculty to recommit to and support the kind of journalism that we have always valued. These two programs help to anchor our commitment to public service journalism and are playing an important role in the redesign of the curriculum.

Solutions

Organizing and consolidating resources were central to our program revision The broadcast journalism piece of the curriculum was moved out of broadcasting and back into the journalism department. That meant a faculty member with radio and television news experience was now a part of our journalism faculty and could bring those skills to the table.

A new mission statement and clear educational objectives were fashioned. Together, the faculty agreed to design a curriculum that could be described as "completely integrated" in terms of multimedia. Rather than segregate multimedia skills into a separate class or classes, the faculty chose to embed multimedia learning throughout the journalism skills courses. That decision meant that the curriculum had to be restructured from top to bottom, moving away from an emphasis on writing for print media to writing across all media platforms.

In an effort to create a solid set of multimedia journalism skills, the faculty reconfigured three introductory core courses, which had previously been comprised of a print-writing course, a multimedia course (where students learned to use equipment and computer programs) and a print-based reporting course. The revised core courses are still writing-oriented, but they also incorporate a variety of digital media. The curriculum is arranged sequentially in a way that allows students to build on what they have learned from one course in the next.

The first course, Digital Journalism I, focuses on text-based writing and an introduction to taking still photographs. In this class, students are introduced to journalism standards and practices, and learn to write basic news stories, feature stories, captions, and how to take still photographs. In this course, students are introduced to Photoshop and InDesign, programs that are also used in upper-division courses. In the core course students are taught only as much as they need to know to accomplish the tasks necessary for assignments. In other words, the class serves as an introduction, not a complete overview of the programs' features.

In the second core course, Digital Journalism II, students learn to write for the ear, that is, to produce audio stories for radio or for the web. They are still assigned print-based writing assignments; the additional emphasis on writing for the ear in this class allows them to learn to discriminate between the different writing styles. Because students come into the class with basic photography skills, they are in a position to create audio/slide news presentations in addition to simple audio stories. Students use Final Cut Pro X to create their audio stories and sound/slide stories. Journalism faculty members agreed to use Final Cut Pro X in this class, despite the fact that there are more basic programs available, so that students will be familiar with the program when they get to the third core course, where they are introduced to video storytelling. Again, the idea is not to teach programs comprehensively, screen-by-screen; students learn enough about Final Cut Pro X in this class to do audio stories and drop in still pictures when required.

Digital Journalism III, the last course in this sequence, allows students to continue writing and reporting stories, but adds shooting and editing video into their skill sets. Students continue to develop a knowledge base about journalism standards and practices, and develop their writing and reporting skills. In Digital Journalism III, students work individually and begin to work in groups to do more complex reporting projects.

To further develop the curriculum, we instituted two required in-depth reporting courses. The topical focus changes from semester to semester, but the student assignments are expected to be multimedia. The variable nature of the topic areas ensures that students report on subjects that are timely as well as timeless. This flexibility has allowed us to offer a variety of specialized in-depth reporting courses, ranging from business to the arts; it has also enabled us to offer in-depth election reporting courses during the recent election cycle, and a course in covering protests, a topic in the news of late, given Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker's budget cutbacks and dissolution of public employee unions.

Finally, the faculty has instituted two capstone courses. One capstone course is for students interested in pursuing careers in magazines and another is for students interested in a career in news; both emphasize multimedia writing and reporting.

In addition, students in the journalism major also take theory, history, ethics and law courses, as well as electives in the major. Through the electives, they are able to learn additional writing, photography, design, editing and broadcast skills of their choosing.

A Closer Look at Solving the Problem

Much of the faculty's recent work on curriculum reorganization has been focused on the first three foundational courses. As described above, Digital Journalism I, II and III incorporate rigorous writing components; but at the same time new media and other kinds of technology are woven throughout. This structure, we believe, allows us to focus on technology as a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. In approaching the problem this way, we were able to craft a core curriculum that does three things. First, the scaffolding approach allows students to be introduced to topics and skills in one class, and then revisit and practice the skills in subsequent classes. Second, a detailed written curriculum clears up confusion that is normally involved in teaching courses that incorporate new media. Each core course syllabus very clearly spells out what media are to be used in the class. This predictability allows faculty to be released from the burden of trying to learn all new media; they can focus on media skills that are specifically required for the class or classes they'll be teaching. Third, this approach releases the faculty in upper division courses from having to do a lot of remedial instruction. They can be confident that all students entering their higher-level courses have received instruction in basic media skills. We have tried stand-alone courses and workshops for skills training, with disappointing results. When students don't regularly practice the skills they have learned, in class after class, they forget, which means that instructors in the higher level courses have to figure out how to get students up to speed before they can address advanced topics.

To achieve this revitalization of the journalism curriculum, the faculty has had to cooperate in a way that has not been required in the past. The problem-solving process has required work, patience, mutual trust and a "can-do" attitude. All of the faculty have agreed that they must be able to depend on one another to ensure that students get the training that they need in the core courses so that they are prepared to do multimedia work in the advanced courses. To make certain that everyone knows what needs to be taught, the faculty is creating separate e-books for Digital Journalism I, II and III.

The Marquette journalism faculty began by creating a list of concepts and skills that are required for each of the three core courses. They developed units of instruction, drawing on their particular expertise and experience. For example, one faculty member, a particularly good feature writer, took responsibility for creating "feature story" units for each of the three core courses. Each level is a bit more complicated than the preceding level. Another faculty member, who teaches communication law, has taken responsibility for creating the units that focus on law. One instructor, with experience teaching photojournalism, put together the unit related to photography, while the instructors with broadcast experience have crafted the units on writing for the ear. Another faculty member, skilled in the area of numeracy, agreed to create the units on data analysis.

The faculty members agreed to prepare specific elements for each unit of instruction. Each unit contains a list of concepts to be taught, a brief description and/or explanation of each concept and its importance, a list of related readings or resources, two exercises with accompanying grading rubrics, and the ACEJMC standard addressed by the exercises. This organization allows for systematic assessment of the learning that goes on in each of the courses.

In addition to following this structure, each of the digital journalism core courses has a particular reporting focus. In Digital Journalism I, the students cover campus events. In Digital Journalism II, they turn their attention to local government, covering the courts, police, the fire department, and the city council. In Digital Journalism III, the students focus on the larger community, its issues and its people.

The process of creating the e-books began in January, 2013. Since then, we have completed a draft of the e-book for the first course and are finalizing a draft of the book for the second course. We will begin piloting our revised courses in the fall.

Looking Ahead

The Marquette journalism faculty will continue to develop a curriculum that is flexible, comprehensive and able to meet the needs of the students and the profession. We recognize the news environment is likely to continue changing at breakneck speed, and our curriculum must reflect and respond to those changes. At the same time, we believe that there are, and always will be, constants. For example, we believe that the curriculum must focus on educating responsible journalists, sustaining the field's standards and practices that have evolved over time, among them truth, fairness, accuracy and balance. We believe that citizens will always need that kind of information.

Our faculty has been learning to adapt to the new order together. The process has been challenging at times but we continue to find our way. We know that we must find solutions to the problems created by recent technological and economic upheavals using only our existing resources. We recognize that this process requires all of our best thinking, our cooperation and our willingness to take risks.

Oh, and somebody please put on the coffee.

Dr. Karen Slattery is Chair of the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at Marquette University.

PANEL EXPLORES OPTIONS FOR GETTING MORE FROM SENIOR FACULTY DURING TIMES OF CHANGE IN THE CLASSROOM

By Nancy C. Cornwell, Montana State University

At the 2013 ASJMC Winter Workshop, I was fortunate to sit on a panel that explored ways to support senior faculty in and out of the classroom. Panelists and audience members offered a range of fascinating ideas for adapting to changing teaching technology and pedagogy, especially in journalism and mass communication programs. As with all good conversations around complex and important matters, we left with some excellent tips, tools and resources that could be used immediately. In the time since the panel, two questions about senior faculty have lingered in my mind: Who *are* the faculty we are *really* talking about and how do we best understand what it is that will support them as productive members of the academic community in which they have invested a significant part, if not all, of their careers?

Who are "senior" faculty?

The term "senior" faculty, frankly, is confusing because we use it to describe everyone from tenure to retirement. It seems to encompass a mix of full-time status, rank/tenure, age and longevity at a particular institution.[1] Yet, such a flexible and expansive set of criteria does not embrace for the ebbs and flows of an academic career. Nor does the term "senior" faculty seem to regularly account for the reality that colleges and universities employ long-term, non-tenure track faculty whose "senior" status does not have the clear demarcation of tenure and/or may not account for the possibility of promotion. In short, non-tenure track faculty may never be able to lay claim to the status of "senior" faculty, yet they may have invested an entire career at a single institution. In any effort to understand what techniques, strategies and resources will support faculty throughout their careers, the term senior faculty is not terribly useful.

My sense is that at any point along the continuum of a post tenure career or, alternatively, at a less defined point in a non-tenure track career, the specific strategies to support faculty engagement in the full range of their work may be quite broad and driven by differing aspirations and goals. Those focused on a plan to achieve the full professor rank in the minimum allotted time are on a different trajectory than those with the *potential* to achieve rank, but not on any particular timeline. And different from either of these is the faculty member who is likely to remain an associate professor for the remainder of his/her career. Each is likely to approach work differently and benefit from different kinds of support and resources.

For a department head or a dean, the challenge, in the words of one department chair handbook is to "ensure that productivity trajectories remain positive in some cases and are transformed from languishing to increasing in others."[2] In one of the most cited sources on the "vitality" of senior faculty,[3] we are reminded that there are senior faculty who are exceptionally productive and there are those who are not (the latter being held who are held up as an examples of a tenure system gone bad). As administrators we are wise to not develop policies based on outliers. However, some of the reasons we might struggle with supporting senior faculty can be connected to an administrator's more immediate focus on the development of tenure track faculty, prioritizing limited funds for junior faculty, and because the day-to-day work of administrative does not help us to remain cognizant to the nature and pace of scholarship, especially how it might shift after significant milestones such as tenure. The particulars of newly tenured faculty or faculty in the first decade of a career can be quite different from faculty in the final years of a long career, and who may be ready to retire, yet whose retirement plans have been delayed because of factors outside their control.[4]

The "benign neglect" of senior faculty is a missed opportunity, as I believe they can play an important role in a swiftly changing educational environment. But for the purposes of this discussion, I want to delineate between the circumstances facing "senior" faculty, and split them into two groups: early career senior faculty, and the group about which I have some particular thoughts, late career senior faculty.

Early Career Senior Faculty

Support for early career senior faculty – those on the heels of tenure – is about continuing the growth and productivity in a burgeoning career that may have been largely spurred by the pursuit of tenure. Now a department head or dean needs to help faculty coming off a successful tenure bid maintain momentum in research, remain invested in quality teaching and, hopefully, shift towards more significant (and even leadership) roles in the self-governance process and in external organizations. At the same time, department heads and deans must be mindful that newly tenured faculty avoid the service "black hole."

I suspect we all could recount anecdotal stories of colleagues who speak of the symbolic "exhale" after a successful bid for tenure, as well as those who face a "what now?" moment or a "crisis of meaning."[5] However, whether early career senior faculty describe a post-tenure experience of feeling rudderless or otherwise step back from the more frenzied pace that anticipates tenure, it is different from the kind of disengagement that weighs on my mind. The unmapped territory has to do with the shifting concerns, conditions and challenges associated with late career senior faculty.

Late Career Senior Faculty

The 1986 Age Discrimination in Employment Act eliminated mandatory retirement, but a temporary exemption was put in place for colleges and universities to continue mandatory retirement for tenured faculty at age 70. That exemption expired at the end of 1993. Researchers have documented that faculty are working longer[6] and postponing retirement as a result.[7] The rationale for continuing the exemption for tenured faculty rested primarily on the desire for higher education administrators to hire new faculty (presumably to infuse programs with new energy and ideas) and because of the added cost and planning challenges of senior faculty who would not predictably retire.[8]

There is no shortage of resources that focus on helping faculty transition to retirement although some of the incentives employed when mandatory retirement ended may be less effective now.[9] Still, many institutions provide transition programs or support in the form of post retirement contracts, or a phased retirement. A 2013 TIAA-CREF Institute study reported that almost 40 percent of colleges and universities have a phased retirement program for full-time, tenured faculty.[10] Most of those programs included contributions to health insurance premiums and more than half included some retirement benefits. Given the financial pressures at many institutions, it should not be surprising to learn that a majority of the institutions responding to the TIAA-CREF Institute study offered an early retirement buyout to full-time faculty. Incentive programs aside, higher education faces an aging professoriate and a large number are poised to retire in the next decade.

Certainly there is opportunity that comes with a large turnover of faculty – fresh ideas, new curricula, salary savings – but there also is institutional history that may be lost with retiring faculty. It may seem counter intuitive for an administrator who could otherwise be anticipating all the opportunities to be had when recouping a senior faculty member's salary to seek ways to re-engage late career senior faculty. At institutions where I have worked, we came to count on the differential between the salary paid to a senior faculty member and the salary offered to the assistant professor likely to fill the vacated line. Savings accrued with a couple of retirements could be re-packaged into funding for a new line or fund sabbatical replacements, search costs, pay for furniture and re-models or other languishing needs resulting from financial pressures facing many colleges and universities. So from the perspective of the institution, the transition of senior faculty towards retirement may well be viewed as an "opportunity."

From a senior faculty member's perspective the terrain can look quite different. The transition to retirement has been complicated by the financial uncertainty that pervades the current economy.[11] Exasperating the sense of uncertainty are institutional-level changes: dropping enrollment and the subsequent institutional economic pressures; or, alternatively, record breaking enrollment and the resultant push to explore new delivery modes and pedagogies (from online courses, to MOOC's, to flipped classrooms). Bottom line: it is tough to be a new faculty member – tenure or non-tenure track – and it is increasingly tough to be an engaged late career senior faculty member amidst the sea change in higher education.

Since that winter meeting, I continue to have a sense that there is a contingent of faculty about which little is written and few support systems explored. It is reasonable to conclude some did not intend to continue working for this long and may have been transitioning away from an active research agenda, service obligations and/or new course preps. Now circumstances require they continue with full-time work. Some are struggling with the financial barriers to retirement. For others, it is the emotional and social piece that is the barrier. Calling it a "social death,"[12] University of Virginia President Teresa A. Sullivan has suggested the "prospect of retiring can seem threatening to faculty members' sense of themselves, and many want more than anything to keep an office or lab space on campus after they retire."[13] Today's economy has created a cohort of colleagues who by choice or circumstance might expect to work for another 10 years. How exactly do we keep engaged faculty who find themselves a decade or so from retirement – a situation that may be of choice or by circumstance?

Faculty at this point in their career may well need resources and assistance to "update" teaching technology and pedagogical skills, and even re-invigorate research agendas. But limiting our efforts to skills updates – while arguably essential – could miss opportunities to more deeply engage late career senior faculty in meaningful ways. There are two strategies I would like to offer that have helped me understand the myriad of ways late career senior faculty can contribute in substantive ways to their institution.

Using the Five-Year Plan

A very wise dean (now a college president) used to pester me to tell her my five-year plan. I was a senior faculty member, serving as a department chair and I had never consciously mapped an aspirational plan for where I wanted to be in five years. Just the process of imagining what I would like to be doing, and where I would like to be, seemed daunting amongst the business of teaching and serving as department chair. Turns out, it was a useful exercise in helping me identify my strengths and passions. It also helped me clarify what aspects of my career were not as fulfilling. It was never intended to be a contract or a commitment, just a process driven effort to "think forward." Now, I encourage faculty to do this. It spurs conversations with my colleagues that help identify timelines for promotion, sabbaticals, and other milestones in an academic career. As with me, it seems to help my colleagues think long-term when the day-to-day demands of teaching and research can consume all the focus and energy one can produce.

I think there is real value in having late career senior faculty go through the process of five year planning – whether or not retirement is, for them, part of that time frame. It could lead to surprising and delightful insights into your colleagues' passions and interests. You might learn of a book they would like to write, a course they want to teach, or that they would like to mentor students or junior faculty, launch a new center, recruit majors, serve on a specific committee, start a new program or revise a current one, or engage in interdisciplinary and collaborative work. My point is that having faculty "think forward" is a useful tool at any point in a career, but can provide particularly helpful and specific insights into the interests of late career senior faculty.

Aligning Gifts with Opportunities

So if a five-year plan helps faculty and, in particular, late career senior faculty "think forward," the next step for a department head or dean is to leverage those interests to the benefit of the academic unit and its students. Listening carefully to your senior colleagues can result in a powerful alignment of interests with workload in a way that balances the needs of an academic unit with a respectful acknowledgement of the career investment made by your most senior faculty. With few exceptions, my own efforts to re-engage late career senior faculty in this manner has been a positive experience. Below are some examples of ways in which late career senior faculty might re-engage in their institution – all potentially the result of tapping into the strengths, experiences and institutional wisdom "in the room."

- Using prior experience as a department head to cover for another department in need
- Writing curriculum for a new degree program
- Collaborating on research with junior faculty (has the mutually beneficial impact of supporting junior faculty and maintaining senior faculty research productivity)
- Expanding teaching load when research productivity and interest has waned or wound down in the final years of a career
- Assisting with the strategic planning process
- Expanding one's student advising role
- Developing a diversity recruitment plan
- Embarking on a late career sabbatical to pull together a lifetime of work to make available to teachers that follow
- Preparing a history of one's program or academic unit
- Leading the professional re-accreditation process
- Helping to shepherd and manage innovation and change

If you have the flexibility in your workload assignments to accommodate the interests of your late career senior faculty, there may be real opportunities to significantly engage colleagues, who hold deep institutional history, in moving your academic unit and programs forward. There is no uniform formula to re-engage late career senior faculty. It is essential to listen. And then listen again to what career accomplishments make your senior colleagues most proud. Ask *them* what they would like to do. It is rarely a perfect alignment of interests and needs, but there may be common ground. Higher education is changing quickly and engaged late career senior faculty could be key to managing change effectively. Late career senior faculty can serve as a stabilizing force, taking on leadership roles in innovation or serve as a valuable touchstone to insure important qualities in your program are not abandoned in a time of dynamic change that seems to define the current state of higher education.

What I propose is building a *relationship* with senior faculty that is based on careful listening to their passions and interests, focused on finding productive common ground, and with a sense of respect for their accomplishments and what they can bring to the table moving forward. We stand on the shoulders of those who came before and given the trend of faculty working longer and later and more often into their 70s, those shoulders that represent the foundation upon which we build the future of our programs and for our students… may be in the office down the hall.

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PROFESSOR DISCUSSES TRANSITION FROM NEWSROOM TO CLASSROOM

By Donna Bertazzoni, Hood College

The summer before I moved from the newsroom to the classroom, I spent a lot of time planning my classes and imagining what I would say to students. I was convinced that because I was an editor who could work well with reporters, that I would be a teacher who could work well with students. I was right; I took to teaching immediately. I still love teaching. What I didn't plan for, though, was everything else I would be expected to do. As a new faculty member coming from industry, I quickly learned that there was a whole lot more to surviving in the academic world than simply being a good teacher. There are hours of classroom preparation and grading; expectations for scholarship and professional development; and advising, service and faculty meetings. Fortunately, with the help of my department chair and a good mentor from my program, I learned to write nearly ironclad syllabi; manage my classes; select committees that would help me learn about the college; and develop a research and professional development agenda. In short, I learned to navigate the minefields of academia as well as I had industry, and eventually, I reached my goals — not only to mold undergraduates into today's journalists but also to earn tenure.

Fast forward 20 years. Now I am the mentor, and I have learned a lot about how deans, department chairs and program administrators can ensure that other new faculty who are moving from the newsroom to the classroom become effective teachers and colleagues worthy of tenure. An important first step is to ask a senior member of the department to serve as a mentor. That person can provide advice about teaching, developing syllabi and managing the classroom; advising students and extracurricular activities; identifying a research topic; serving on committees; and all of the other intangibles that make up the daily life of a college professor. While it helps if that person has also successfully transitioned from industry, the key is to identify an individual who knows what is important at your institution, and who is willing to take the time to discuss problems and answer questions.

Inside the Classroom

Excellence in teaching is often the most important criteria for renewal, tenure and promotion, and honestly, no one can teach someone how to teach. It is a skill that develops through practice. However, mentors can help ease the transition into teaching by advising new faculty members about how to set expectations and manage their classrooms. That begins with a strong syllabus that outlines student learning outcomes; required texts and readings; a day-by-day course outline; course assessment standards; deadlines; and, finally, classroom management policies.

Over the years, the length of my syllabus has increased from two pages to four or six and sometimes even longer, depending on the course. I have learned that the more I write down, the fewer disputes I have with students. So as your new faculty are constructing their syllabi, advise them to answer some questions both for themselves and their students.

First, what are the student learning outcomes? It is difficult to teach a course well without a clear understanding of what students are expected to learn and how they are expected to demonstrate that they have learned it. Student learning outcomes are at the heart of a course. They should guide how the syllabus is constructed; determine what texts and readings are assigned; and what and how many tests, papers, projects and other assignments are required. Is this an entry-level class or a capstone experience? What are the students expected to learn that will inform and prepare them for the rest of their education? A mentor can help a new faculty member understand how the learning outcomes for this class complement the outcomes for the program and the institution.

Second, is the required text truly required and will it be used? Textbooks are expensive, and many are updated every year. Some students try to save money by buying or borrowing an earlier version; others don't buy the book at all. Advise new faculty members to make their policy clear. Can students share a book? Will one be on reserve in the library? Does it matter if students have an earlier edition? Will the students use the book in other classes? Also, remind new faculty to seriously consider whether the text will actually be used. Students naturally become frustrated when an instructor requires an expensive textbook, yet the readings from it are never discussed. The resale price of books is nowhere near the initial cost.

Third, how firm is the day-to-day course outline? Let new faculty members know that it is always smart to include a statement that the course outline can change due to unexpected circumstances. Inclement weather, power outages and illness are just a few of the reasons why a class could be cancelled. In those instances, a syllabus can instruct students to check the course management system to find supplementary assignments or to participate in out-of-class discussions.

Fourth, what are the course assessment standards? Students always want to know what they have to do to earn an "A" in a class. (No one ever asks how to earn a "C".) Advise new faculty to provide an explanation or the rubric that is used for grading assignments. The syllabus should include a general guide to how much each assignment, test or project counts toward the final course grade. Other items to consider: Do class participation and attendance matter? Are rewrites allowed, and if so, how are they counted? Finally, mentors can help new faculty members decide what elements are important when grading papers and exams, and can help them develop rubrics. A rubric makes grading easier by standardizing how much is deducted for such errors as misspellings, buried leads and missing sources.

Fifth, how firm are the deadlines? A syllabus should make clear exactly when and in what format assignments are due. These days, a simple date is no longer enough. Is the assignment due anytime before 11:59 p.m., or at the beginning of class? How should assignments be submitted — online or in a hard copy? Make sure the directions are clear about length and font and type size. A three-page paper in Times New Roman 12 point is longer than a three-page paper in Ariel 14 point. And should a paper be single- or double-spaced? When working with a hard copy, a single-spaced paper is more difficult to correct.

Mentors can also advise new faculty about how far in advance to provide directions for papers and projects. Some students are go-getters and during the first month of the semester, they will ask for directions for a paper that's due the last day of class. Are they ready to complete the assignment at that point?

A syllabus can also be used to clearly outline classroom expectations. Mentors can advise new faculty members about what can distract the teacher or students in the classroom and whether there should be an attendance policy. What should a student do when he or she is sick? Are makeup tests allowed? What about electronic devices such as computers, iPads and recording pens: Are they allowed or discouraged? What about students who need accommodations?

Clearly, college isn't elementary school; students do not ask permission to use the restroom. But students can be expected to be seated when class starts and remain there except in an emergency. It is distracting when a student arrives late or has to leave early. A line in the syllabus can make it clear that those students should sit close to the classroom door. Faculty should also set a policy about food and drink. The scent of fries can overwhelm a small classroom. Water is generally not a problem, but inevitably, someone's soda bottle will explode or spill during the semester. And what should be done about the snoozers, sleepers, talkers and texters? A line in the syllabus can warn them that they may be embarrassed if they're sleeping in the front row, gossiping in the back or texting under the desk.

A mentor can advise a new faculty member about whether the institution has an attendance policy or if it is up to the individual instructor. If there is a policy, how will the faculty member enforce it: Will roll be called or will an attendance sheet be circulated? Will a student's grade be lowered after a certain number of absences? Should students notify the faculty member in advance, if possible, when they will miss class because of illness or an emergency? Is a doctor's note necessary? Is there a limit to the number of allowed absences no matter what, or will there be flexibility in case of serious illness or a death in the family? And what is a true emergency? Not being able to find a parking space generally does not count. As part of the attendance policy, a faculty member should make clear what the policy is for makeup tests and late assignments, especially when illness is involved. A mentor can't emphasize enough that when it is written down in the syllabus, it's more difficult for the student to argue about the policy after the fact.

Electronic devices are a mixed bag. In a reporting class, computers, iPads and smart phones may be essential. In a lecture class, they may be used for surfing the Web. Mentors can discuss college policy on whether devices such as recording pens or tape recorders are allowed. Students should know enough to silence their phones and refrain from texting during class, but they don't. If texting during class is banned, use the syllabus to warn students that their phones may be confiscated. It's difficult to ban electronic devices entirely, though. Because of the Americans with Disabilities Act, many students receive accommodations, including note takers, extra time for exams, and the right to use computers for note-taking. A mentor can advise new faculty members to make clear in the syllabus that it is the students' responsibility to provide their official notification of eligibility for accommodations.

Finally, before the semester starts, a mentor can work with the new faculty members to compare all their course syllabi before they are distributed. Help new faculty maintain their sanity by advising against trying to grade two midterms and a research paper in the same week. Make sure the classroom management policies are clear and consistent from course-to-course. Above all, though, warn the new faculty member to be flexible and expect the unexpected. In my years of teaching, I've had classes cancelled because of snow, ice, hurricanes, pneumonia (mine), appendicitis (my son's), and the attacks of September 11. No matter how detailed a syllabus is, it can't account for everything.

Outside the Classroom

A new faculty member's responsibilities do not end with constructing an air-tight syllabus and teaching great courses. There's also advising, scholarship and professional development, service to the institution, and striking the right balance to find some time for family and friends. A mentor knows that the new faculty member's professional expertise likely played an important role in his or her hiring. Nonetheless, when that person comes up for review, tenure or promotion, the committee that examines the dossier will likely consist of faculty members from across the institution. Their background will be very different, and a good mentor can help new faculty learn what the institution expects and values.

At most institutions, faculty members are expected to advise students. Mentors can help new faculty learn about their own major. What courses are required, what are the prerequisites, and how often are courses offered? Which courses should students take to fit their interests and reach their full potential? The ultimate goals are to ensure that students aren't being advised to take courses they're not ready for, and that they graduate in a timely fashion. New faculty should also be ready to offer internship and career advice. There's likely a career center at the school, but in students' minds, there's no substitute for professional experience, knowledge and advice.

New hires who have a Ph.D. probably already have a research agenda. It is more difficult for professionals who are moving directly from the newsroom to the classroom to develop one. This is another area where a mentor can provide invaluable information about what is considered important at the institution. What standards will a professional communicator be held to when reviewed for tenure? What is considered "scholarship" or "research" or "professional development" or whatever the term is at your institution? Can research be "practical" or does it have to be "scholarly"? It is helpful for new professional faculty to get that information clarified, written down in advance and signed by the appropriate administrator.

Mentors can advise new faculty about whether the institution accepts articles written for professional journals such as *Columbia Journalism Review*, or if it expects peer-reviewed scholarship. Is publication essential, or are papers or panel presentations at conferences such as AEJMC's acceptable? Is it enough to attend conferences, or does the faculty member need to produce something tangible, and if so, how soon? AEJMC and organizations like it are great resources for new teachers. They can join divisions and interest groups that fit their background and teaching areas, attend the annual conference, submit papers, give presentations, and best of all, learn from colleagues who have years of experience in the classroom.

Service can include committee work, advising student activities or participating in admissions or other on-campus events. Mentors can advise new faculty about which committees will help them learn about and better understand the institution, and which activities will help them become involved with and known by other faculty. If the new faculty member was hired with the expectation that she would be advising student media, make sure the expectations are written down and signed by the dean or provost. Will the work be considered service or is it part of the faculty member's course load? A mentor can provide advice about whether organizing or participating on panels that are open to the campus community, or judging professional contests, are considered service.

For new faculty member coming from the newsroom, life in academia can be overwhelming. They are trying to organize their classes and learn to teach them well. They have papers and exams to grade and lectures to prepare. They want to get to know their students and advisees, and help guide them in their career development. They are trying to establish a research agenda and get elected to committees. They may wonder if they made the right decision, leaving a world where they knew what to do and how to deal with the unexpected. As a mentor or a department chair, you need to encourage them to stop every once in a while and have some fun. Advise them to take some time for themselves and enjoy their friends and family, because they are adjusting too. Your faculty deserve some time to catch their breath and enjoy their new life.

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