

# ASJMC INSIGHTS

*Spring 2013*

## *INSIDE:*

**Annual Survey of Mass Communication Students  
and Graduates Returns to Its Origins**

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**Mass Communication Programs Must Better Adapt  
to Changing Professional World**

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**Scouting Reports: Using Surveys to Explore Prospective  
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**Student-Media Advisory Boards Operate Best  
When Given Clear Mandates**

*From the Editor*

**Keeping an Eye on the Forest**

By James L. Stewart

ASJMC **INSIGHTS**

*ASJMC Insights*

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*From the Editor*

## KEEPING AN EYE ON THE FOREST: TECHNOLOGY IS A MEANS, NOT AN END

*By James L. Stewart, Nicholls State University*

As a middle-school student I visited Washington, D.C., on a class trip. Among the activities my classmates and I took part in was a tour of the FBI building.

In those days tours ended with a shooting demonstration by an agent. To me, as a teenager, this seemed really cool. Yet, what stuck with me was not his marksmanship, but something he said during the question-and-answer session that followed.

Someone asked if it were true that FBI agents were instructed to shoot to kill. The agent responded that real-world gun fights are not like those depicted in film, where the good guys, from the back of a galloping horse, can shoot the gun out of a villain's hand at 200 yards. In the real world you aim for the center of mass and try to end the fight before innocent people get hurt.

But, he prefaced this explanation with a comment that went something like this: "We do not shoot to kill. We shoot to terminate."

At the time I found the disclaimer ironic. The person on the receiving end of a bullet probably has no interest in the shooter's choice of infinitives.

I've written in this column before about the importance of definitions in our changing industries. I return to this issue because I believe it to be of increasing importance.

There are two reasons for my . . . maybe angst.

First, in recent semesters I have assigned undergraduate students book reports on George Orwell's *1984*. What they have repeatedly found worthy of comment was Orwell's notion of "Doublespeak." (I'll set aside for now

discussion of their apparent inability to focus in on the central message of the book or to see the parallels between Orwell's vision and the world in which we now live.) Even they see the potential for harm of "Doublespeak."

Of course, obfuscating language is nothing new. In fact, it should always be expected from the alphabet soup of bureaucracies with which we deal.

My second concern is that we seem less inclined to battle against the surging tide of "ese" language (bureaucratese, educationese, legalese, Penatagonese, sportugese, etc).

Based on an e-mail from a friend employed by a nearby newspaper—one which recently decided to publish a print edition only three days per week—we seem to be getting swept into the herd.

There are no longer editors at his paper; there are "managing producers." Reporters can now be addressed as "content gatherers." Copy editors have been replaced by "curators, designers and page producers."

As I have written before, I believe it is vitally important that we take the time to ask ourselves what we truly are. Clearly technological and attendant cultural changes must be addressed. But shouldn't we be asking how technology can best be used to accomplish our goals rather than letting it determine them?

Will "content gatherers" take the time to find out and explain to their audiences that "collateral damage" means that noncombatants were caught in the cross-fire?

Having spent so many years in administration, I find myself falling victim to the malady of educationese. There was a time when I would have abhorred using words like “abhorred” and “obfuscate.”

We feel such enormous pressure to respond quickly to a world that seems to be changing at an increasingly rapid pace that we do not always take the time to consider the long-term consequences of our actions.

I study karate, and my instructor constantly chastises me for wanting to move too fast. It seems counter-intuitive, but too much speed in a combat situation is risky. A mantra he has tried to get me to accept is that there are times when “Slow is smooth, and smooth is fast.”

It would seem that the academy is where we should be taking the time to examine more deeply the changing na-

ture of mass media environments.

Obviously we want our students to have the professional skills required by the world that we hope they will enter. But, we also owe them and the professions a deeper understanding of the true impact of their actions—a perspective drawn from a position slightly to the edge of the raging maelstrom created by the grind of daily production demands, a perspective that is perhaps more reasoned for having been derived from this vantage point.

We should constantly remind ourselves that technology should not stand in the way of our ultimate responsibility—regardless of whether we are advertisers, journalists, public relations practitioners or workers in some related field—to communicate with others honestly and clearly. Rather, it should help us to do so more effectively.

# ANNUAL SURVEY OF MASS COMMUNICATION STUDENTS AND GRADUATES RETURNS TO ITS ORIGINS

*By Lee B. Becker and Tudor Vlad, University of Georgia*

The decision by ASJMC to take over ownership of the Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Enrollments and the Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates gives the former its first-ever institutional home and the latter its first home since 1986.

In many ways, however, the decision brings the surveys back to their roots. Concerns about enrollments and employment as well as the surveys themselves are deeply embedded in the history of journalism and mass communication and its institutions.

The Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Enrollment is a census of a defined population of journalism and mass communication programs around the country.<sup>1</sup> It provides data on enrollments, degrees granted, faculty hiring and characteristics, and curricular offerings in those programs.

The Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates is based on a sample of the programs in the enrollment survey.<sup>2</sup> The survey is sent to spring graduates of the sampled programs and gathers data on employment status, job-seeking activities, salaries and other compensation, as well as on professional attitudes and behaviors of the graduates.

Together, the two surveys provide basic supply-and-demand data for the entry-level labor market of the many professional communication occupations linked to journalism and mass communication education.

These two surveys are supplemented by three others. The first is the ASJMC Faculty Salary Survey.<sup>3</sup> The second is a survey of hiring by the daily newspaper industry and by radio and television newsrooms.<sup>4</sup> The third is a survey of doctoral degree programs in the field of communication.<sup>5</sup>

These surveys are all directed in the James M. Cox Jr. Center for International Mass Communication Training and Research in the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Georgia and will continue as such for the short term while ASJMC decides how to sustain the surveys in the future.

The surveys have been important in the past as assessment tools for the field of journalism and mass communication. They can become even more valuable in the future under the leadership of ASJMC.

## **Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Enrollments**

*Journalism Quarterly* published the first known survey of enrollments in the field of journalism in the News Notes section of its December 1934 issue. "There has been a definite increase in enrollment among schools and departments of journalism this fall, according to the reports recently received by the editor of News Notes," the article stated.<sup>6</sup> Franklin Banner of Pennsylvania State University edited the section. He made no mention of sampling methodology, but he reported some data from 27 universities (Table 1). Administrators reported class enrollments, majors and degrees granted, but sometimes it is hard to know from the report what was being reported.

While the report focused on the increase in enrollments, it also presented some information on employment. "Some directors express a considerable alarm over the increase, feeling that the surplus cannot be properly absorbed by the newspaper staffs still suffering under the effects of the depression," Banner wrote.

Banner presented data on enrollment by gender and by specialty for a few programs. Dr. John E. Drewry at the Henry W. Grady College of Journalism at the University



of Georgia reported, for example, that the 160 graduates represent “those intending to go not only into newspaper work but also into allied fields.” The University of Missouri reported that its first semester enrollment consisted of 226 men and 113 women.

By 1935, Douglass Miller of Syracuse University had taken over the enrollment report by virtue of his assuming editorship of *News Notes*.<sup>7</sup> He reported that he had obtained data from 19 of 22 members of the American Association of Schools and Departments of Journalism and from seven of 11 non-members. In 1938, he said his data came from a “survey” of enrollment figures of AASDJ members and non-members.<sup>8</sup> In 1943, he referred to the undertaking as the “Fall Enrolment Survey.”<sup>9</sup> The first actual table of enrollment data appeared in a *Journalism Quarterly* issue of 1938. Enrollments were reported separately for freshmen through seniors and for graduate students.

Elmer Beth of the University of Kansas was editor of *News Notes* in 1945 and 1946, and he continued the enrollment survey of both AASDJ and non-member institutions. In 1947, Douglass Miller, then at Stanford, assumed the editorship again and continued the enrollment report. (He also started using “enrollment” rather than “enrolment.”<sup>10</sup>) Warren Price of the University of Oregon was editor from 1948 to 1951, and he assumed responsibility for the enrollment survey and retained that responsibility even after his editorship ended in 1952. In 1959, Frank J. Price of Louisiana State University took over responsibility for the survey. Paul Peterson of Ohio State University assumed responsibility for the enrollment survey in 1968. Peterson also assumed editorship of the *News Notes* section of *JQ*. *News Notes* moved to *Journalism Educator* in 1971 (under the heading *News of Journalism Education*, with Peterson as editor), and the 1971 enrollment survey appeared as a separate article in the January issue of *Journalism Educator*.<sup>11</sup> Lee B. Becker, then at Ohio State University, took over responsibility for the enrollment survey in 1988, when Peterson retired.

The methodology for the enrollment survey evolved over time. In 1951, Warren Price reported that he included members of AASDJ, which had become the Association of Accredited Schools and Departments of Journalism, as well as other programs listed in the *Editor & Publisher International New International Yearbook*.<sup>12</sup> He reported that he had sent the survey to 90 programs. In 1959, Frank Price reported that he had sent the survey to 46 AASDJ member schools (and obtained data from 45) and to 63 other

**TABLE 1: ENROLLMENT REPORT FOR 1934**

School	Class Enrollment	Majors	Degrees Granted
Univ of Montana	25% increase		
New York Univ	1,245	300	
Univ of Iowa	293		
Ohio State Univ		271	
Univ of Illinois			76
Univ of Missouri	339 (1st semester)		
Stanford Univ	143		
Univ of Georgia			160
Columbia Univ		73	
Univ of Washington		323	
Rutgers		138	
Syracuse Univ		179	
South Dakota State Univ	75% increase		
Cornell Univ	82 (intro. class)		
Boston Univ	119		
Univ of Oregon	24% increase		
Univ of Wisconsin	larger freshman class		
West Virginia Univ	125	49	
Univ of Kansas	18% increase		
Temple Univ		137	
Univ of Texas	increase		
Northwestern Univ	substantial increase		
Butler Univ		37	
Creighton Univ (Neb.)	increase of 11 students		
Kansas State College		134	
Oklahoma City Univ		85	
University of Nebraska	163 (first semester)		

programs listed in the *Editor & Publisher International Yearbook* (and obtained data from 60 of them).<sup>13</sup> In 1967, Price’s last year with the survey, he reported sending the survey to 151 programs, including the 55 schools accredited by the American Council on Education for Journalism, which had become the accrediting agency for the field.<sup>14</sup>

At this point, the population of schools was defined by Price, based on his knowledge of the field. It included the accredited programs as well as others he identified as offering journalism programs. Peterson continued that procedure in the years he managed the surveys. In 1968, his first year, Peterson reported that he had sent the survey to 157 schools and departments in the United States, Canada and Mexico, though only data from the United States were used in the report.<sup>15</sup> He also indicated he had included the 55 accredited programs. Peterson referred to the survey as the *Journalism Quarterly* Survey. In 1987, his last year directing the project, he reported sending the survey to 243 schools.<sup>16</sup> Becker modified the methodology in 1988 to align it with the methodology of the Annual Survey of Journalism and Mass Communication

Graduates.<sup>17</sup> The population was defined as schools listed in the *AEJMC Directory* and/or in the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund's *The Journalist's Road to Success: A Career Guide*. In 1992, the population was expanded to include Puerto Rico.<sup>18</sup>

From the beginning, the focus on what came to be known as the enrollment survey was on enrollments, though the definition of enrollment itself varied. Peterson specified that he was counting majors in 1970, not simply students taking courses.<sup>19</sup> That definition has continued since that time. The survey first reported degrees granted in a systematic way in 1959.<sup>20</sup> In 1962, the survey broke down enrollments by sequence.<sup>21</sup> In 1963, enrollments were reported by sex.<sup>22</sup> Race of the students was first reported in 1973.<sup>23</sup>

### Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates

Although that very first report on enrollments in journalism programs included anecdotal reports on the employment of those graduates once they left the university, the enrollment survey never systematically gathered data on employment.

That task fell to Tom Engleman, executive director of the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund, who in 1964 began surveying a sample of administrators of journalism programs around the country, asking them to report on the employment experiences of their graduates.<sup>24</sup> Dow Jones and Company founded the Fund in 1958, and Engleman wrote that the study began informally and “was intended to inform newspaper editors of hiring trends and salary patterns.”<sup>25</sup>

Engleman used two directories to define his population: *The Journalism Educator's Annual Directory* and the Fund's *Journalism Scholarship Guide*. But he also used the data on degrees granted as reported in *Journalism Quarterly* and *Journalism Educator* as a benchmark.

Engleman sent out his survey in the fall of the year and asked for a report on the experiences of the graduates from the previous academic year. For 1964, he received data from 98 programs. The administrators reported on the experiences of all of their graduates for the previous academic year. Engleman reported that 19.4 percent of the graduates found work with daily newspapers, and 3.3 percent found work with weekly newspapers.<sup>26</sup> Engleman included data on gender of the graduates from the beginning. He also included data on

both bachelor's and master's degree recipients. The “average” annual salary earned by a bachelor's degree recipient who took a job with a daily newspaper in 1964 was \$4,897.

In late 1975, Engleman asked Mark McElreath of Rider College to draw a sample of graduates of journalism programs around the country and a questionnaire that could be mailed directly to those graduates.<sup>27</sup> McElreath stratified the schools by degrees granted, based, it seems, on the enrollment survey. He selected 30 schools. Administrators of these schools sent the Newspaper Fund a list of the graduates from the previous academic year. The Fund then sampled systematically from those lists. It sent out 966 surveys by mail and, after two follow-up mailings, received returns from 60.6 percent of those graduates. Graduates were asked if they found work, where those who had jobs were working, what types of work they were doing, how much they were earning, and how satisfied they were with their work. They also were asked to evaluate the “adequacy” of the journalism education they received. In 1975, the survey started counting the number of minority graduates, and in 1978 the survey reported data on minority graduates separately from those not designated as minorities. Starting in 1979, the survey only reported data on bachelor's degree recipients. The survey also included only spring graduates. In 1981 and 1983 (and perhaps in 1982), the sample and field work were handled by Gallup.<sup>28</sup>

Becker assumed responsibility for the graduate survey in 1987. In that year and the following year, he used the sample of programs that had been used by the Newspaper Fund since 1983.<sup>29</sup> In 1989, he drew a new sample from programs listed either in the *AEJMC Directory* and/or in the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund's *The Journalist's Road to Success: A Career Guide*.<sup>30</sup> This provided an identical population definition for the two surveys. Also in 1989, he began including master's degree recipients, who had not been included in the graduate survey systematically until that time. In 1997, he moved the graduate survey—as well as the enrollment survey—to its current home in the Cox International Center at the Grady College.

Table 2 shows one of the key questions asked in the graduate survey from 1964 until today. Data are reported only for bachelor's degree recipients for each of the three years selected. The data for 1964 are based on administrator reports of their graduates, while the 1979 survey employed a methodology nearly identical to the

**TABLE 2: EMPLOYMENT OF BACHELOR'S DEGREE RECIPIENTS WITH JOBS IN COMMUNICATION**

	1964	1979	2011
Daily newspaper	38.5	22.4	5.6
Weekly newspaper	7.4	14.0	2.7
Radio station	7.2	9.6	1.0
Television, including cable	5.2	7.9	10.9
Consumer magazine	10.1	2.6	2.3
PR	13.7	15.4	10.7
Advertising	15.3	10.5	10.9
Wire	2.5	0.9	0.3
Other	0.0	16.7	55.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

one used in 2011. The table shows very dramatically the shift away from the traditional employers. The Newspaper Fund (now the New Fund) began the survey in 1964 because of its interest in promoting the newspaper industry. The table helps demonstrate the inherent shift in the focus of the graduate survey itself over time.

### ASJMC Faculty Salary Survey

The ASJMC Faculty Salary Survey has been conducted annually since at least 1982. The survey is sent to administrators at ASJMC schools and gathers data on the salaries paid to individual faculty members (listed anonymously) and on the characteristics of those faculty members. The survey also asks administrators to report budget information for their unit.

Initially, the survey work was handled by ASJMC Executive Director Len Lanfranco in collaboration with Elnora Stuart of the University of South Carolina faculty. The Center for Advanced Social Research at the School of Journalism at Missouri handled the survey work for several years. The ASJMC central office reassumed responsibility for the surveys, ending with the survey for 1997-98.

In 1998, Becker took over responsibility for the fieldwork for the ASJMC Faculty Salary Survey and integrated that fieldwork with the fieldwork for the enrollment survey at the University of Georgia.<sup>31</sup> Since some of the data previously gathered as part of the salary survey were already being gathered for the enrollment survey, it was possible to simplify data gathering for the salary survey.

### Doctoral Degrees Granted

Starting with the 2001-02 academic year, the project began including data on the characteristics of doctoral students graduating from programs in the broad field of communication. We undertook this because of our own concerns and concerns on the part of others that the pipeline to faculty positions in journalism and mass communication was not very diverse.

The Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Enrollments provides data on enrollments and number of degrees granted by doctoral programs specifically linked to undergraduate journalism and mass communication education. These programs are not the only doctoral programs in the broad field of communication. As a result, the Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Enrollments under-reports doctoral enrollments and degrees granted to those who become faculty members in the field of journalism and mass communication.

To address this problem, we conducted a separate survey of doctoral programs in the field of communication in 2001-02 to learn about enrollments in all doctoral programs in communication.<sup>32</sup> The specific goal of the project was to determine the racial and ethnic characteristics and gender of the students enrolled in doctoral programs and who had completed their studies in communication doctoral programs during the academic year.

Each year since that 2001-02 survey, we have gathered data on students enrolled in doctoral programs in the broad field of communication using the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), the core postsecondary education data collection program of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). IPEDS gathers data from all primary providers of postsecondary education, including universities and colleges, as well as from institutions offering technical and vocational education beyond the high school level.

In addition to providing data on the number of degrees granted, the racial and ethnic characteristics of those students, as well as their gender, the project provides the best source on programs offering doctoral programs in communication in the United States.

### Hiring Surveys

The Dow Jones Newspaper Fund began surveying daily newspaper editors in 1970 to learn about their hiring activities—how many people they hired, how many of them

were directly from a university, and how many had journalism degrees.<sup>33</sup> The survey was a companion to the Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates. The Daily Newspaper Hiring Survey moved to Ohio State University in 1987 and then to the University of Georgia in the autumn of 1997.

The Daily Newspaper Hiring Survey has been conducted in 1970, 1974, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005 and 2010. In 1990, 2000, 2005 and 2010, a select number of comparable questions on hiring by news directors in television and radio newsrooms was added to the Radio-Television News Directors Association Women & Minorities Survey. In 1995, these same questions were included in a survey of television news directors conducted as part of the SPJ Jane Pauley Taskforce on Mass Communication Education.

These surveys have answered one of the most frequently asked questions in journalism education: what percentage of entry-level hires in daily newspaper and radio and television newsrooms come from journalism and mass communication programs. That figure has varied over time. In 2010, 87 percent of the entry level hires at daily newspapers came from journalism and mass communication programs. For television newsrooms, the figure was 91 percent.<sup>34</sup>

### Funding of the Surveys

Funding for the Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Enrollments until 1988 was provided by the institutions that hosted the researchers. Ohio State University, for example, supported the work of Paul Peterson. The Dow Jones Newspaper Fund provided funding for the Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates until 1987. Since 1987, a group of associations and foundations has provided support for both the enrollment and graduate surveys, with additional support coming from Ohio State and the University of Georgia, the project's current home. The ASJMC Faculty Salary Survey has been funded by ASJMC alone as a member service. The Doctoral Degrees Report was initially funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and has been incorporated into the overall survey operation since. The Daily Newspaper Hiring Survey was funded by the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund until 1990. Since that time, it has been funded by special grants.

The McCormick Foundation has provided funding in recent years to help develop a sustainable model for fund-

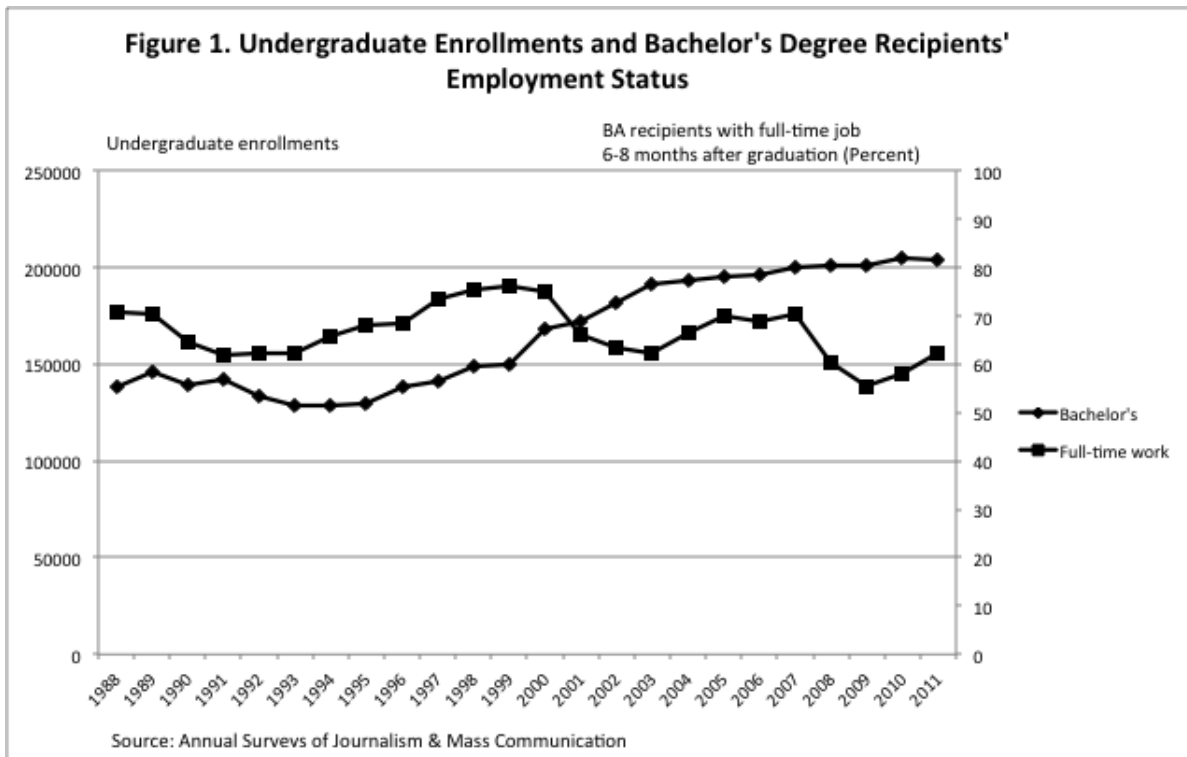
ing for the future. For the current year, a leadership team of 18 universities within ASJMC has contributed \$54,500 to support of the Annual Surveys of Journalism & Mass Communication. Other sponsors are: the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication, Gannett, Hearst Corporation, McCormick Foundation, the Newspaper Association of America, and the Scripps Howard Foundation. The total budget for 2012 was \$106,500. That does not include the salaries of either of the authors of this report, which are covered by the Cox International Center and the University of Georgia. The space for the surveys is donated by the University of Georgia.

### The Surveys as Tools of Evaluation

As is clear from this brief historical account, the various surveys that make up the Annual Surveys of Journalism & Mass Communication have always been tools of evaluation. The enrollment survey has been used from the beginning as a tool for assessment of student interest in the field of journalism and mass communication. The graduate survey has been from the beginning a means of testing the effectiveness of those programs in producing graduates needed by and accepted by the labor markets. The daily newspaper hiring survey and the companion surveys of hiring by the radio and newspaper industries supplemented the graduate survey data by providing more detail on where those industries turned for their personnel needs. The ASJMC Faculty Salary Survey provides data on salaries that allow administrators to assess the adequacy of their own compensation packages. The doctoral reports provide data needed to understand and project the field's likely effectiveness in meeting diversity goals.

Based on data on where graduates go to work, it is clear they are doing better in the current, very difficult labor market than are others in the labor market in their same age cohort.<sup>35</sup> Starting in 2009, the unemployment rate for journalism and mass communication graduates has been lower than the unemployment rate for people 20 to 24 in the larger labor market. That certainly is positive news for the field.

Because we have historical data, we know that the field of journalism and mass communication has broadened considerably from its journalism roots, though the comment of Dean Drewry at the University of Georgia reported above indicates that the field has always been diverse in terms of student interests.<sup>36</sup> In 2011, only 2.4



percent of the undergraduate students were classified as in “news editorial/print journalism,” which is the smallest number ever classified in that category. In 1989 that figure was 12.3 percent.<sup>37</sup> If all of the variations of journalism offerings are combined, 29.6 percent of the undergraduates in the fall of 2011 were in journalism. That is a significant percentage, but it indicates that any discussion of the field that focuses only on journalism is ignoring the majority of students and their interests. It also means that the future of the field is a diverse one that embraces the many communication occupations and a multitude of student interests.

Data from the hiring surveys show that the daily newspaper industry has depended heavily on journalism and mass communication programs to fill entry-level vacancies.<sup>38</sup> From 1980 to 2010, the every-five-year surveys have shown that the lowest level of hiring from journalism and mass communication programs has been 75 percent and the highest was the 87 percent. The two years when the figure was 75 percent—1990 and 2000—were years in which journalism and mass communication graduates reported high levels of employment six to eight months after graduation. It is at least possible in that circumstance that the relatively low salaries of the daily newspaper industry accounted for the relatively low level of hiring rather than any rejection of graduates of journalism and mass communication programs.

Educators, even back in 1934, were concerned about the relationship between the number of graduates of journalism and mass communication programs and employment.<sup>39</sup> And critics today suggest that deficiencies in journalism and mass communication education are producing problems for those graduates in the labor market. The data indicate, however, that the most important determinant of the labor market for journalism and mass communication graduates is the overall economy. Though journalism and mass communication graduates can outperform their cohorts by a small margin, they are not likely to have radically different experiences from others in that market. And the data also show that the relationship between enrollment levels in journalism and mass communication and the level of employment of those graduates is quite complex and quite surprising. As Figure 1 shows, enrollments in the field have increased since 1995 and have been unaffected by the dramatic drop in levels of employment after 2000 and again after 2008. In fact, in recent years, enrollment has leveled off and dropped slightly, while employment levels have increased.

These are all rather broad examples of how the data from the Annual Surveys of Journalism & Mass Communication serve the field. But more recently, a number of programs have begun using data from the graduate survey in a very specific way to help with

evaluation. The University of Georgia, the University of Minnesota, the University of Memphis, and Ohio University compared the experiences of their own graduates with graduates in the country to help them assess the effectiveness of their programs. The University of Minnesota has been particularly innovative, making comparisons not only with the national norm but also with a select group of peer institutions. As more and more institutions decide to join the Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates as oversamples, such peer comparisons will become more informative.

The history of the Annual Surveys of Journalism & Mass Communication is rich. It also has been dependent

on a small number of individuals and their host universities. The decision of ASJMC to become the “owners” of the surveys testifies to the importance of the surveys and the data they provide. It also does much to guarantee their future.

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# MASS COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS MUST BETTER ADAPT TO CHANGING PROFESSIONAL WORLD

*By Dorothy Bland, Florida A&M University*

While justice and fairness remain core journalism values, the business of journalism and mass communication education is facing major disruption, and changes are needed to survive and thrive.

Perhaps that's why I start every day seeing an "Innovate or Die" sign posted on my mirror. Given the fact that the traditional news and information industries we serve are being disrupted, why would institutions of higher education be immune?

Eric Newton, a senior adviser to the president of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, told educators gathered at Middle Tennessee State University for the "Journalism Education in the Digital Age Conference" in May 2012 that "radical change requires radical reform" and I agree. He summarized four transformational trends worth posting for those who care about JMC education, including the need for:

- JMC programs to expand their roles as community content providers.
- More innovation and becoming an "engine for change."
- Teaching more collaborative models.
- Connecting to the whole university.

Newton has repeatedly blasted the "symphony of slowness" that plagues JMC programs, and he raised some valid points. Why should it take a year or more to institute curriculum changes or to conduct a faculty or administrator search? Do the organization names for the Association of Education in Journalism and Mass Communication and the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication accurately reflect who we are and aspire to be? It is no accident that the RTNDA has been transformed from the Radio Television News Directors Association to the Radio Television Digital News Association. If you look at growth trends in communica-

tion industry spending, there clearly has been a seismic shift with more dollars being invested in targeted marketing, entertainment and leisure. If you look at enrollment trends at many JMC programs, you will see students who are increasingly digital natives and a growing number of programs dominated by female students interested in public relations and integrated marketing communication. Would we be better served by switching the "Mass" in both AEJMC and ASJMC titles to "Media" to better reflect media convergence in the digital age?

As educators and administrators we must do a better job of anticipating, analyzing and acting on trends as well as communicating with internal and external stakeholders about why journalism and communication matter. Yes, JMC programs need to be great storytellers, but we also need to become better strategic thinkers and champions for service learning so that others understand the value of media literacy throughout our institutions' general education core and the world.

When was the last time you looked at the Veronis Suhler Stevenson Communications Industry Forecast and started a "Did you know?" conversation that framed your journalism and/or mass communications program as part of the booming communications industry?

- Did you know the communications industry is projected to be the eighth fastest-growing and fourth largest U.S. economic component by 2015?
- Did you know the communications industry is projected to reach more than \$1.4 trillion by 2015?
- Did you know that segments such as consumer Internet and mobile services, public relations/marketing and broadcast television were expected to outperform gross domestic product performance in 2012?



For those who say they got into journalism or mass communication education because they didn't want to deal with numbers or change, then it's time to get out because understanding the numbers and managing change are two constants. Yes, accountability always matters and JMC programs are not for the timid. For those warriors preparing for the battles ahead, consider adding these two quotes to your arsenal:

“Our liberty depends on the freedom of the press and that cannot be limited without being lost.” — Thomas Jefferson

“We need to become centers for experimentation and innovation, and move from rather passive observers to passionate participants....”  
— Ernest Wilson, dean of the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Southern California.<sup>1</sup>

Susanne Shaw, the executive director for the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, said that “leadership” is the greatest issue facing many JMC programs. Over the summer, she identified more than a dozen JMC programs looking for chairs, directors or deans ranging from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to Howard University in Washington, D.C.

It appears there are three flavors of JMC programs around the nation. Those that are research intensive and primarily only Ph.D.'s need apply, those that are teaching intensive and those that are hybrids. While some JMC programs require doctorates for administrators, there is an increasing number of nationally recognized and very successful programs headed by deans with strong industry track records without the Ph.D., such as Lorraine Branham at Syracuse University, Susan King at the University of North Carolina, Jerry Ceppos at Louisiana State University and Christopher Callahan at Arizona State University, to name a few.

Apparently, an increasing number of major programs understand that fundraising skills and industry experience are just as crucial to survive and thrive as the letters behind a name. No wonder the “Fundraising Secrets” session was standing-room-only during the ASJMC meeting last August in Chicago. An increasing number of JMC programs at public institutions are learning they are more likely to be “state-located” rather than “state-funded,” in the words of Tim Gleason, dean of the School

## WHY JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION EDUCATION NEEDS REFORM NOW

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*J – Justice*

*O – Online communication*

*U – Understanding connection engines*

*R – Research or scholarship*

*N – Newsgathering skills*

*A – Assessing and analyzing audiences*

*L – Leadership*

*I – Incubators of innovation*

*S – Storytelling, service learning and strategic thinking*

*M – Money matters*

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of Journalism and Communication at the University of Oregon. Whether you are a public or private institution, we all are being asked to do more with less and multi-tasking is the norm. There is much opportunity for JMC programs to help industry address the looming revenue crisis. While journalism and the communications industries are considered public trusts, they're also part of a trillion dollar business that requires money to survive. Yes, money and marketing matter. That's why I'm an advocate for teaching more entrepreneurial skills and business journalism.

If you have not read *Disrupting Class: How Disruptive Innovation Will Change the Way the World Learns*, by Clayton Christensen, Michael B. Horn and Curtis W. Johnson, then I highly recommend it. The book tackles a variety of critical issues ranging from school funding and support systems to disruptive change being a positive force. One of the most profound statements in the book is, “The way we measure schools' performance is fundamentally flawed.”<sup>2</sup>

When I moved full time into the academy as a professor and journalism division director at FAMU in 2007, I was shocked when a colleague told me that improving operating efficiencies was not a priority, but securing tenure was. Based on conversations with colleagues around the nation, I have since learned that post-tenure review is weak or non-existent in some places. Nonetheless, teaching, research and service remain the triple metrics commonly used to provide faculty members feedback during performance reviews in most JMC programs. Rather than simply using teaching as the first paradigm and focusing on syllabi collection, I suggest we focus more on

student learning and engagement. In the words of Christensen and his colleagues, “To introduce customization, schools need to move away from the monolithic instruction of batches of students toward a modular, student-centric approach using software as an important delivery vehicle.”<sup>3</sup>

Keep in mind that the Knight Foundation report on training released during the AEJMC Convention in August identified the top three training topics sought by folks in the profession as technology (78 percent), multimedia skills (77 percent) and data skills (75 percent). Yes, there is ample opportunity for JMC programs to improve linkages with the professions we are training students to enter, and that professional scope is broader than traditional media. Virtually every business, think tank or government organization has communication needs. How different would JMC programs be if every semester at least two professionals-in-residence exchanged duties with two faculty members in a media outlet? Also, are there more opportunities for integrated programming with organizations such as the Online News Association or one of the minority journalism news organizations?

Curriculum reform and e-learning are two other critical issues facing many JMC programs. One sign of the changing times is that Florida A&M University has the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication. Our Journalism Division curriculum was revamped in 2010 so that four traditional sequences in the Journalism Division (broadcasting, newspaper, magazine production and public relations) have been consolidated into two tracks (reporting with strong multimedia components and public relations). Students have daily access to a multimedia empire that includes hands-on experience in a live TV newscast, radio station, newspaper, magazine, student-run PR firm and multiple websites. We also have instituted a school-wide core so that Journalism Division and Graphics Division students all take Introduction to Mass Media, Communications Law, Media Ethics, Photo Foundations, Design Fundamentals, Web Design and Professional Development Colloquium classes. Capstones and internships also are required. Remember, curriculum reform is an ongoing process and not a destination.

At the national level, the Carnegie Knight Initiative for the Future of Journalism Education book, which was published by Harvard’s Shorenstein Center in 2011, should be required reading for JMC administrators regardless of institutional size. Newton and others

have been advocates for the “teaching hospital” model that would require top professionals in residence at universities. I often ask students, “Would you marry someone that you have not dated?” The response is always no. Internships are opportunities to get to know the fields the students are interested in. The same reasoning applies to placing top professionals in residence within JMC programs. Does that not enhance the student learning experience? Is there anyone out there who wants a surgeon to operate who has the academic credentials, but has never actually worked at least several years in an operating room? Don’t you want skills that are current and relevant? What would happen if there was a continuing education requirement for journalism educators?

And what about diversity? Given the fact that many JMC programs are now dominated by female students, it is encouraging to see that more women are being tapped to serve as deans in JMC programs including the recent appointments of Ann Wead Kimbrough, DBA, at FAMU’s School of Journalism & Graphic Communication, and Diane McFarlin, the former long-time Sarasota *Herald Tribune* publisher, at the University of Florida. From a diversity perspective, there is good geographic diversity among the dozen Carnegie Knight Task Force members representing schools ranging from the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University to the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. However, why is there not a single historically black or minority-dominated college or university on the task force given the growing diversity in the United States?

As for the e-learning explosion, if you don’t have an online learning strategy that includes mobile devices, it is time to develop one. A Pew Center survey released in July showed that 60 percent of 1,021 survey participants who are tech leaders agreed that “there will be mass adoption of teleconferencing and distance learning to leverage expert resources (and) a transition to ‘hybrid’ classes that combine online learning components with less-frequent on-campus, in-person class meetings.”<sup>4</sup>

Research or scholarship is another area that will require some radical change. Given the explosion in social media and the need to strengthen partnerships, we cannot afford to be, in the words of human rights activist and political pundit Al Sharpton, “experts in the past and absent in the present.” My point is that we need to seriously rethink our sometimes archaic publication cycles

for scholarly work and give more attention to how social media are impacting communication. As I reflect on the 2012 AEJMC and ASJMC meetings in Chicago, I will not forget the words of Mizell Stewart III, the vice president of content for the E.W. Scripps Co., who asked, "How much of research is done about the practice of

journalism vs. the sustainability of journalism?" I argue we need to do both.

*Dorothy Bland served five years as the journalism division director at Florida A&M University and remains a professor.*

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# PROJECT OFFERS INSIGHTS ON ENGAGING MILLENNIAL STUDENTS

*By Rochelle L. Ford, Howard University; JoAnna Jenkins, Howard University; and Sheryl Oliver, Howard University*

Administrators and faculty, like marketers and other organizations, have been wrestling with trying to understand Millennials, a generation born between 1982-2002 (Howe & Strauss, 2000), also called the “Digital Natives,” as to how they approach media, digital technology and diversity; this new generation is seemingly very different than the generations who are hiring, managing and teaching them.

Estimated at 80 million or 100 million with the inclusion of immigrant populations (Orrell, 2009), Millennials wield about \$170 billion in purchasing power (Keeter, 2010) and are the first American generation to have grown up totally immersed in a world of digital technology. To help understand this population, the American Advertising Federation through its Mosaic Center hosted a series of panel discussions as part of its Thought Leadership Forum: *A Millennial Perspective on Diversity and Multiculturalism* in Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Minneapolis and Washington, D.C.

## **General Insights into Millennials**

According to a 2011 study conducted by Cisco Systems, Millennials view the Internet as important as air, water, food, and shelter (Stricker, 2010). More than 80 percent of Millennials sleep with and rely on a cell phone for their communication needs; 88 percent use their cell phones to text; 75 percent have created a profile on a social networking site; and 20 percent have posted a video of themselves online (Keeter, 2010). Moreover, the Internet rivals television as a main news source among this generation, and it is more likely than all other age groups to watch videos online, play games and frequently post messages to someone’s online profile.

Millennials also represent America’s most ethnically and racially diverse cohort ever. Among Millennials between the ages of 13 and 29, 18.5 percent are Hispanic, 14.2 percent are Black, 4.3 percent are Asian, 3.2 percent are Mixed Race or Other and 59.8 percent are Caucasian (Keeter, 2010). Millennials have been noted for their high levels of tolerance and desire for self-expression and individuality.

Millennials are confident, self-expressive, liberal, upbeat and open to change. Howe and Strauss (2000) describe them as sharing seven core traits: special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, conventional, pressured and achieving. Having a propensity toward altruism, Millennials value family and friends and look forward to finding a balance between their home-life and careers (Keeter, 2010). They get along well with their parents and value extended family networks, particularly highly revered grandparents (Howe & Strauss, 2000). At the same time, many parents of Millennials are considered to be Helicopter Parents because of their tendency to be exceptionally protective of this generation and at times given to excessive coddling and praise. Twenge (2009) suggests that Millennials have been consistently taught to put their own needs first and to focus on feeling good about themselves. Their incessant use of technology has contributed to their impatience, high expectations, appetite for brevity and shortened attention spans (Hoover, 2009). Nonetheless, Millennials revel in their abilities to multi-task, covet the technology that facilitates their lifestyle and desire to always stay connected (Keeter, 2010).

Just as companies are learning how to market to Millennials, educators can apply some of the same marketing

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principles to improve teaching, learning and alumni relations with them.

### **AAF Thought Leadership Insights**

Overwhelmingly, Millennials and leading advertising professionals participating in the AAF Thought Leadership Forum agree that content is one of the most critical factors in engaging Millennials, who are making most of their consumer choices based on content, not gender or ethnic representation. Personal lifestyles and interests trump other dimensions of diversity and have a greater impact on purchasing behavior, brand interests, friendship, influencers, etc.

Millennials affiliated with AAF student chapters do not want to be seen as targeted audiences, but rather perceived as communities that can be reached through similar interests. At the same time, they want their cultures to be appreciated, respected and celebrated with integrity.

Indeed, Millennial panelists identify themselves as tolerant and accepting but not naïve. They contend that culture is complex and deeply interwoven into their lifestyle. Overwhelmingly, Millennials' definition of diversity is broad, viewing diversity as much more than race, gender and ethnicity and incorporating all the differences that exist within people from religion, language, geography, nationality, sexual orientation and interests. Millennial panelists all took a nuanced approach to understand multiculturalism and race, focusing on other elements of diversity, culture and subcultures. Although the terms diversity and multiculturalism currently are often used interchangeably or as code words to mean racial and ethnic minority groups, Millennials reject such notions. Although most Millennial panelists say they were trained not to look at race when looking out into the world, most of the Millennial panelists express self-awareness of the complexity of their identities and how they are shaped by different experiences. While they understand the role that race and ethnicity have played and continue to play in American society, they recognize that the traditional definition of race may need to be re-examined to include class.

However, Millennial panelists state that they do not discuss diversity and multiculturalism with peers; instead, they live it, calling it a state of mind. Despite media reports stating that Millennials live in a post-racial society, across the board, Millennial panelists reject the notion that America has become a post-racial society, citing a

multitude of personal examples as to why America is not a post-racial society. They attribute their perspective to pervasive stereotypes in advertising, the racial historical context of America and their personal experiences with racism.

Millennial panelists are not forgiving of brands that misrepresent culture through cliché adaptations of life. They want brands to be authentic. They don't want to see advertisements with one person of each gender and racial group represented, especially when the colleges or the brands do not have that sort of representation in their employee, student or consumer base.

As part of this authenticity, advertising Millennials want organizations to deconstruct their brands. This brand deconstruction involves making brands more humanized, even befriending them. They want to interact with brands, have interactive conversations with them online and off-line, be involved in decision making, feel appreciated by them, and be encouraged by them. Millennials asserted that they want brands to be interesting, trustworthy, authentic, engaging, interactive, humorous, and entertaining. Moreover, the nature of Millennials to seek information compels their desire to learn about the brand and its story. Millennials respond to mission statements, well-crafted narratives and brand heritage that they identify with, and revealed that they would support brands that empower them, make their lives easier and demonstrate a shared desire to support causes they believe in. Millennials repeatedly emphasize a desire to use their consumerism to contribute to positive change that appeals to their interests.

Revering social media, they firmly assert that their schedules are jam-packed with so much to accomplish that they have no free time. Millennials identify themselves as multi-taskers who are always online, and they believe social media facilitate connectivity within their busy and hectic schedules. Social media, particularly Facebook, were highlighted for their convenient ability to allow Millennials to remain in touch with family and friends, to expand their social networks off-line, to learn about different subjects and interests, to facilitate intercultural relationships, and to have conversations that are not a part of the mainstream and even to break down barriers and dispel stereotypes.

Millennials enjoy ritual forms of communication that draw people together in fellowship and commonality. They emphasize the representation of shared beliefs, not the act of imparting information. Unlike traditional class-

rooms that emphasize transmission communication, Millennials want learning communities where real conversations are created. Such communities can be formed via social media. Millennials on the panels note their strong desire to share information and learn new things, placing emphasis on sharing food, language and gaining new knowledge regarding travel, events and restaurants of interest. They expect to be engaged in real life and in virtual scenarios. Employing story-telling skills is critical to reaching Millennials; rich narratives assist in garnering clout among Millennials.

Other ways to increase clout among Millennials include helping to dispel some of the misconceptions that people have about Millennials' work ethic, knowledge and abilities. For instance, although Millennials are heavy users, educators and employers should not always translate that as the ability to apply professional strategies to social media and other emergent technologies. Likewise, several Millennial professionals at the Thought Leadership panels are discontented about being erroneously viewed as lazy or disengaged, and they affirm that they are extremely hard workers and desire to bring their whole selves to work, thus emphasizing the importance of making organizational cultures more inclusive. Millennials share the perspective that inclusion means accepting people as they are—similarities and unique qualities—and being open to them unconditionally. They feel it's unfair to feel forced to disassociate themselves from their culture or identity in order to work in the advertising industry. Millennials say that having multicultural friends and environments allows them to become well-rounded, to overcome stereotypes and misconceptions, to become abreast of a wide range of national and international events and information, to understand people better, and to shape their own beliefs and values systems.

Likewise, Millennials desire environments accepting of varying work styles and environments that have organizational structures that support Millennials' interests such as the use of social media. According to the Cisco Systems' survey, 64 percent of the Millennials surveyed indicated that social-media usage policies are an important topic of discussion during a job interview, and 33 percent of Cisco Systems' respondents stated they would take a job that offered social media freedom over salary (Stricker, 2011). Some embrace the idea of companies

offering opportunities for Millennials to freelance and work from home, recognizing that they may thrive and be more productive without micromanagement and traditional settings.

Finally, Millennial and professional panelists say that industries must continue to diversify their workforces particularly at executive levels. Diversified leadership creates a greater potential for more voices to be heard.

These marketing-centric insights can be applied to journalism and mass communication in several ways:

1. Consider engaging students in authentic ways through conversations about issues affecting the classroom, curriculum, teaching and learning and even about budgetary issues.
2. Incorporate storytelling to communicate with Millennials on important issues.
3. Teach storytelling in the curriculum.
4. Create a balanced level of transparency and openness, demonstrating the "human-side" of the administration and faculty.
5. Demonstrate relevance in every lesson, exploring how students can use information and skills in various settings related to self-interests.
6. Seek multicultural learning opportunities by exposing students to diverse people, literature, experiences, food, languages, etc.
7. Recruit, retain and promote diverse faculty and administrators.
8. Promote inclusive school environments where students, faculty and staff can bring their whole-selves to campus and can have open exchanges of information.
9. Optimize use of social media to reach students and alumni.
10. Be open to learning from and adapting to Millennials.

**To learn more about the AAF Thought Leadership Series, visit <http://aaf.com> or call (202) 898-0089.**

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# SCOUTING REPORTS: USING SURVEYS TO EXPLORE PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND VALUES

*By Barbara Barnett, University of Kansas*

Do you know how many of your students want to work for ESPN? How many want to be combat photographers? If any want to work as Taylor Swift's publicist, as an advertising executive with General Motors or a brand manager for Starbucks? At our university, we have a good idea.

In 2006, our journalism school began administering surveys to learn more about the knowledge, attitudes and values of students considering careers in journalism, public relations and advertising. (One of the questions we asked was to name their dream job, which generated the answers above.) We developed these questionnaires to explore students' use of media, their views on ethics, their knowledge of the First Amendment and their perspectives on the value of diversity in the communications professions. Since the first surveys were administered, we have learned that mass media are so much a part of our students' lives that they talk about "loving" their iPhones and being "addicted" to Facebook; their use of online news sources is increasing while their use of traditional media, including TV news and newspapers, is declining; and they set high standards for the ethical behavior of communications professionals but not such high standards for themselves.

We used the data we gathered to develop a series of "scouting reports." These short summaries of research results offered a profile of our prospective students and were distributed to faculty, who were encouraged to think about how they might use findings to inform their teaching.

Our motivation for developing these surveys was more than curiosity. The questionnaires were an attempt to gather baseline data, so that faculty might understand better the "starting points" at which students come to the journalism school. As part of a larger, ongoing effort to assess learning outcomes, we proposed to use research

findings to improve teaching practices, guide upper-level course content and curriculum decisions and measure students' learning as they progressed through the journalism program. The ultimate goal was to use evidence, not guesswork, to determine whether students indeed were learning the key concepts and values espoused in our school's mission statement.

## **The Scholarship of Teaching**

Our research efforts were guided by what educators have called "the scholarship of teaching" — the idea of using the classroom as a research "lab" to gauge if and how students are learning.

The scholarship of teaching and learning invites faculty . . . to view teaching as serious, intellectual work, ask good questions about their students' learning, seek evidence in their classrooms that can be used to improve practice and make this work public so that others can critique it, build on it and contribute to the wider teaching commons. (Hatch et al., 2006, p. ix)

While research findings are traditionally shared with colleagues through publications, teaching remains a solitary, almost private activity, witnessed by students but rarely by faculty colleagues, university administrators or the general public (Bender & Gray, 1999; Hatch et al., 2006). The scholarship of teaching seeks to make teaching a site of inquiry and investigation. It involves not only taking stock of the instructor's own teaching practices, but also assessing student learning outcomes.

Assessment begins with the collection of data, and the central goal is to answer the question: What do students know? Kuh (2004) defined assessment simply as "collecting evidence of student and institutional perform-



ance” (p. 161), while Erwin (1991) proposed that assessment is the “process of defining, selecting, designing, collecting, analyzing, interpreting and using information to increase students’ learning and development” (p. 15).

Exams, writing assignments or class projects can be ways to measure individual student performance, but assessment of student learning provides a broader examination, exploring “to what degree and in what manner students are acquiring knowledge or skills” (Froh, 1996, p. 136). Assessment is a “measurement of outcomes of the student experience . . . for the purpose of improving the programs and services which constitute that experience” (Banta, 1996, p. 365), and such measurements allow faculty to examine relationships among program missions, student performance and curriculum and course content. For faculty the benefit of assessment is that it offers information about whether learning goals are being accomplished; for students, the benefit is that teaching techniques and courses are better suited to their needs (Allen, 2004; Palomba & Banta, 1996).

### Surveys of Students’ Perspectives

The idea for scouting reports grew out of faculty discussions on assessment of student learning. A critical step for us was to educate ourselves about the people we were trying to teach. As Wehlburg (2011) notes: “Assessing student knowledge is an integral part of education. Once we know what they know and what they don’t, we can more easily create an atmosphere of challenge that is appropriately rigorous” (p. 3).

An ad hoc faculty committee agreed that in order to assess learning outcomes, a key task was to understand what our students knew when they came into our program. Shulman (1999) has argued that “learners construct meaning out of their prior understanding. Any new learning must, in some fashion, connect with what learners already know” (para. 15). Similarly, Diamond (1998) noted:

Few faculty members are aware of what their entering students already know about the subject and as a consequence they cannot be sure that the assumptions they make about their students are accurate. (p. 59)

With this perspective, we began efforts to measure students’ knowledge, attitudes and values as they entered our program. We developed four research questions:

RQ1: What are the nature and scope of students’ media use as they enter the journalism school?

RQ2: What do students know about the First Amendment and ethics before they enter our program?

RQ3: What do students know about plagiarism, fabrication and professional codes of conduct when they enter our program?

RQ4: What are students’ attitudes about the value of diversity in media professions?

We developed a survey on media use, which originally included 35 open and closed questions about students’ use of television, newspapers, magazines, radio and the Internet and later added questions about the use of social media, including Facebook and Twitter. The survey on students’ knowledge of the First Amendment was adapted from a survey developed by a colleague at another university and modified by one of our journalism school professors, who added a component on knowledge about ethical frameworks. This survey was designed to be a pre-test, given to students entering the school, and a post-test, administered at the end of a class on media law. The study on plagiarism and fabrication, developed by a faculty member, included 15 workplace scenarios, in which students were asked to comment on whether they believe behaviors constituted plagiarism or fabrication. The diversity survey was developed by an undergraduate research class and this 43-question survey was administered for the first time in Fall 2010.

Before we surveyed students, we sought and received approval from our university’s Institutional Review Board. We administered the questionnaires at least once each academic year in our introduction to mass communication class, a large survey class that enrolls 400 or more students in the fall and 200 to 300 students in the spring. We told students their participation was optional; however, we offered extra credit to students who did complete the surveys. We posted surveys online and students were able to access questionnaires through the SurveyMonkey program.

### Findings: Connected, Conflicted

Since 2006, we have administered the media use survey nine times and more than 2,100 students have responded. When we began, television was students’ primary source

**TABLE 1: HOW DO YOU GET MOST OF YOUR NEWS AND INFORMATION ABOUT CURRENT EVENTS? (IN PERCENT)**

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Television	38.9	46.2	37.2	29.7	28.1	18.5	17.4
Newspapers	17.7	11.8	10.0	8.2	4.8	3.7	4.0
Radio	3.5	3.6	0.0	2.0	1.3	0.7	0.0
Online	30.1	30.3	41.1	51.0	52.2	61.5	65.8
Friends	5.3	5.4	5.7	4.6	5.6	5.9	6.0
Family	2.7	2.6	4.3	3.6	5.0	5.2	5.4
Podcasts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.7	0.0
Not interested in current events	0.9	0.3	0.0	0.3	1.0	0.7	0.0
Other	0.9	0.0	1.0	0.3	2.0	3.0	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	n=230	n=399	n=435	n=318	n=511	n=135	n=149

of news. Nearly one-fifth of students relied on newspapers and one-third read news online (Table 1). By 2012, consumption of online news had doubled and students' use of television and newspapers had declined. (In this question, we did not ask students to distinguish whether they watched TV news programs or read newspapers online. We simply asked their main source of news.)

When students did watch television news, approximately one-third got their news from major networks and that was consistent for the six years of the survey. Students relied, to a lesser extent, on cable networks for news: 18.1 percent watched CNN, 11.6 percent watched Fox and 11.5 percent said *The Daily Show* was their main TV news source.

Other changes in student media use were:

- Students' Internet use increased during the study time frame. The percentage of "heavy" users (10 hours or more per week) rose from 49.3 percent in 2006 to 76 percent in 2012.
- The percentage of students who said they read a newspaper daily declined steadily from 48.9 percent in 2006 to 24 percent in 2012.
- Twitter use skyrocketed among this group. In 2010, the first year we asked about Twitter use, 21.5 percent of students tweeted (n=628). In 2012, 76 percent of students tweeted (n=143). We learned that nearly 100 percent of our students have a Facebook page, 90 percent or more have 200 or more friends and two-thirds check their Facebook page daily.

Our questionnaire asked students to evaluate the impact of media on their daily lives, using a Likert-type scale. Not surprisingly, the majority of students rated the media's impact on their lives as high, primarily influencing their views about foreign countries and cultures, politics, dating and relationships and morality. Students said media have the least impact on their views about religion and family relationships.

In 2010, we continued our class surveys but added a student assignment that provided qualitative data. We asked students to try to live 24 hours without any form of media—no books, no television, no Internet, no cell phones. We told students we didn't expect them to complete the 24-hour fast and there would be no reward if they did. Instead, we wanted them to reflect, through a blog post, on what life was like without media. In looking at this qualitative data, themes emerged: Students felt isolated and vulnerable without media; some used language of addiction to describe their interactions with media. Their comments became part of our scouting reports.

- My day phoneless, computerless and musicless almost made me feel handicapped.
- I felt naked without using any type of media.
- My life revolves around my media devices. It's like the air I breathe.
- How could I abandon my closest friend, my iPhone?
- I love my phone maybe a little too much.
- The withdrawals were too much for me to handle.
- I felt unsafe. I felt like if something were to

**TABLE 2: STUDENTS' VIEWS ON ETHICS**

How concerned would you be:	If a student did this	A professional did this
Invent sources		
Very concerned	32.0	57.8
Somewhat concerned	39.0	31.0
Neutral	17.2	7.0
Not concerned	9.2	2.8
Don't know	2.7	1.7
Fabricate material/quotes		
Very concerned	44.6	58.8
Somewhat concerned	37.1	30.8
Neutral	9.0	6.2
Not concerned	8.2	1.5
Don't know	1.7	1.5
Plagiarize		
Very concerned	26.2	49.0
Somewhat concerned	44.8	37.7
Neutral	19.2	7.9
Not concerned	7.9	3.0
Don't know	1.9	1.5

happen to me, no one would know.

- We were forced to have an in-depth conversation. We talked about media, actually.
- I have come to realize that five minutes without checking a text message is like the end of the world.
- This year for Ramadan I fasted. No food or beverage of any kind other than water between sun up and sun down. . . . The media fast was harder.

While faculty may perceive mass media as a filter for information, these comments indicate students see mass media as *reality*, not filter.

Predictably, our surveys on the First Amendment and ethical frameworks showed that students' knowledge increased from the time they took the first survey in the introductory class and the time they took the survey later in their media law class. One surprising finding, however, was that students expect media workers to adhere to high professional standards, but they do not set the same standards for themselves. We conducted this set of surveys from 2007 through 2011 and learned students were more concerned if professionals violated ethical standards than their fellow students.

A disturbing finding in our surveys was that, although 41 percent of students thought it was never justified to vio-

late journalistic ethical standards, another 41 percent were neutral or thought it might be justified if they were under pressure from coursework, extracurricular activities or jobs (n=1,766). The percentage decreased among upperclassmen, who had taken the media law course: Two-thirds said violating professional standards would be unjustified, while 21 percent were neutral. Again, numbers were small (n=93), so additional study is needed.

To further explore student values, we constructed 15 scenarios in which a communications professional faced an ethical dilemma and made a decision about how to respond. Students were asked to evaluate whether the professional's behavior constituted plagiarism or fabrication. We included scenarios that faculty members believed clearly constituted plagiarism or fabrication (making up survey data for a marketing report), but we also included scenarios about behaviors that did not necessarily constitute plagiarism or fabrication but were questionable professional practices; for example, asking another student to conduct interviews when the student writing the article did not have time. The majority of students (more than 90 percent) were clear that cutting and pasting from the Internet was plagiarism and more than 80 percent agreed changing a quote to make it sound better was fabrication (n=1,879). However, students were less certain about other aspects of plagiarism and fabrication. Thirty percent of students thought it was acceptable to cut and

paste a sentence from a story more than 50 years old, without attribution, while 47 thought it was permissible to “recycle” a two-year-old quote from another article, without attribution. Nearly two-thirds of students thought it would be acceptable to watch a sporting event on television and file a news story without going to the game.

This analysis indicates that faculty need to be clear about what we find acceptable professional practices, not assume students enter our classes with that knowledge. Also, we need to help students develop ethical frameworks to think through murky situations and to cultivate their own set of values in the face of changing industry standards.

In our survey of student attitudes about diversity, we began by asking an open-ended question: In a few words, please describe what diversity means to you. Student replies focused on difference and acceptance:

Knowing and accepting other cultures.  
Having a bunch of “differentness” —different cultures, religions and colors.  
A society which [sic] recognizes and accepts people with many different beliefs, religions, races, sexual orientations, etc.

We also asked students about their perspectives and interactions with people from cultures different than their own, their views of diversity in news and entertainment media and their views on diversity within our school and at the university.

When students were asked to respond to the statement, “I do not care about diversity that much as long as I can get a good education,” approximately one-third of students agreed or strongly agreed, one-third were neutral and one-third disagreed or strongly disagreed. We also asked students whether too much emphasis is placed on diversity. Twenty-two percent strongly agreed or agreed, 27.6 percent were neutral and 49.5 strongly disagree or disagreed (n=372).

In an open question, we asked why diversity is important. Responses indicated some students saw the value of diversity as a job skill, while others did not.

- I need to learn how to communicate with all types of people.
- Not every single person in the world has the same opinion as you. Crazy, huh?

- I don’t think I will be more intelligent if I am surrounded by people different than myself.
- I came to the university . . . not to be indulged in a diversified society or to learn from teachers who have a troubled time speaking my native language.

Because media professionals need to understand readers, viewers, publics and audiences, this finding indicates that faculty need to help students see how this abstract concept of difference relates to the people they interview or the products they sell. Our school has a requirement that students take a course within the school to learn about diversity and our university is revising the general education curriculum to include a similar requirement for all undergraduates. A post-test on student attitudes might be worth considering.

### Conclusions: A Learning Tool for Administrators

One of the quandaries of journalism administration is that deans are charged with developing programs to meet students’ needs in a rapidly changing media environment, yet administrators can become isolated from students. Deans and department directors spend their days (and nights) cultivating relationships with alumni, meeting with university administrators, planning departmental budgets and working with colleagues to design and redesign curricula. Less time in the classroom can translate into less knowledge about students as individuals and as a group. These surveys offer a way for administrators to “know” their students.

Although responses were unique to our students, these survey results can raise some interesting issues for administrators to consider. Is a curriculum with silos—print, broadcast, photography—the best approach to teaching students who have grown up in an era of converged media (online newspapers, music videos downloaded to computers)? Are we, through these silos, preparing students for careers that may not exist? Because students rely on texting, Twitter and Facebook to communicate with each other, is there a way to incorporate these media into classroom activities and assignments?

Another, perhaps obvious, issue is that faculty need to recognize students’ media use is considerably different from our own—a fact painfully driven home when I once suggested we play a “record” before class began.

The value of this project for our journalism program was, not only its potential to help faculty learn more about

prospective students, but also to encourage faculty to think about what to teach students and how to teach them. For example, we debated combining our First Amendment and ethics courses but decided that students were confused about ethical issues, so a separate course was warranted.

A challenge in conducting surveys is that some students' answers to questions can be unsettling. One of the most surprising findings in our analysis was that students had higher ethical standards for communications professionals than they have for themselves. Our surveys on students' views of ethical behavior—that some wouldn't report cheating and felt it might be acceptable to violate professional standards if they were under pressure—was disturbing. Although we emphasize ethical behavior in new student orientations and in course syllabi and we require students entering the journalism school to sign a form acknowledging they understand that plagiarism and fabrication are serious offenses that may result in failing a course or dismissal from the journalism school, we have learned that not all students internalize those messages. We have begun discussions with student leaders about how to craft our messages. We also need to determine strategies to stress that ethical behavior begins now, not once students enter the workplace.

An additional challenge was faculty buy-in. Although we provided summaries of survey results to faculty through a variety of forums, including emails and presentations at numerous meetings, disseminating the information did not guarantee professors would use it. We hoped faculty would voluntarily incorporate findings to modify classes, but that was not the case. Although we did have a few faculty members who used findings to modify classroom content and practices and faculty committees reviewed the findings as we discussed curriculum revisions, survey results were not widely used. The accrediting site team noted that we had collected a wealth of data, but that the data had not been effectively “looped back” to make improvements or changes in the curriculum.

We are now revising our school's assessment plan and considering how we will modify student surveys and how we will ultimately use our scouting reports. Our goal is to use research to help us measure student learning, make informed changes in our teaching strategies and curriculum and fulfill better our school's mission of training communications professionals to think critically and practice ethically.

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# STUDENT-MEDIA ADVISORY BOARDS OPERATE BEST WHEN GIVEN CLEAR MANDATES

*By Kay L. Colley, Texas Wesleyan University*

The issue of collegiate journalism and advisory boards has a long and illustrious history, dating back as far as Joseph Pulitzer and the creation of the Columbia School of Journalism in the 1890s (O'Dell, 1936). But most recent experiences with advisory boards have led to concern among those in student media, especially with the closing of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Colorado based on an advisory board's recommendation (McDevitt & Sindorf, 2012), just how much power do advisory boards have and exactly what is their role?

An advisory board is defined as a group of people who provide advice for student-media outlets. Advisory boards may contain a variety of people from on campus and off campus and may provide advice or enact policy.

## Literature

In the past, student-media advisory boards have been used to provide a buffer between student media and the administration. In 1998, Neumann University's student newspaper sought to implement an advisory board to keep the administration from practicing prior review. After the student newspaper ran a cartoon that the administration found offensive, administrators demanded that all content in the student newspaper be reviewed prior to publication. The students stopped publishing the paper in protest. A compromise was reached when the student editors agreed to develop a mission statement and create an advisory board of students and faculty but with no administrators (Sine, R, 1998).

As part of his review of the independence of daily student newspapers, Bodle (1997) asked respondents from the nation's 101 daily student newspapers if faculty or administrators had any sway in hiring student personnel, generally a duty assigned to advisory board members. Nine of 10 respondents said never or rarely did faculty

or administrators choose staff writers, but one-third said that editors were usually or always selected with the assistance of faculty or administrators. Two-thirds of respondents indicated faculty and administrators rarely or never participated in the choice of editors.

The Student Press Law Center interviewed the chairs of six media boards during Summer 2003 to determine if media boards are beneficial or if they threaten First Amendment student-media freedoms (SPLC Report, Fall 2003). The SPLC drew this conclusion based on the interviews and anecdotal evidence from several colleges and universities:

"Whether it is called a media board, a publication board or a board of directors, the external group that governs a college student newspaper chooses either to protect or ignore the free-press rights of student journalists" (26).

The SPLC report told of controversies at several universities with student-media boards. The University of North Carolina at Greensboro students stopped publishing the newspaper until a new board was appointed. The student executive editor had to sign a contract stating that he would be accountable for the financial well-being of the newspaper, including preparing a budget for the fiscal year and meeting with the student life-appointed adviser as often as necessary.

The interviews conducted by the SPLC with media board chairs tell a different story. All agreed that student-media boards have an understanding and respect for the First Amendment rights of student journalists (SPLC Report, Fall 2003).

According to SPLC interviews, these were some of the functions of student-media boards: hire and fire the editor, discuss goals and direction of the student newspaper

twice a month, approve and oversee the funding of publications, stop libelous content from being published, uphold student journalists' rights. All six chairs of advisory boards interviewed by the SPLC said they believed they had the authority to fire the editor for content-based reasons. All also agreed that they wouldn't make such a decision lightly (SPLC Report, Fall 2003).

A current research article by Xie and Simon (2012) provides a more predictive look at student-media advisory boards by using members of College Media Advisers as their sample. While the study was intended to look at student media other than newspapers and websites, because CMA membership is more heavily skewed toward those media, results were more heavily skewed toward newspapers and websites. Findings included a significant rise in the number of advisory boards with advisers holding the expectation that the primary role of the board is to serve as a buffer between administration and student media. Advisers also had a high rate of satisfaction with their media-advisory boards, which is counter to the concerns of many student editors, as evidenced by the SPLC Report of Fall 2003.

### **Current Research Study**

A current research study presented by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication sought to determine the current structure and function of student-media boards throughout the nation and to ascertain a best-practices model advisory board that may be used when student media are in the process of creating advisory boards. According to the study (Colley, 2012) "an advisory board is defined as a group of people who provide advice for student media outlets. Advisory boards, as defined by this study, may contain a variety of people from on campus and off campus, and may only provide advice or may enact policy."

A pilot study, using three current student media advisers who responded to an initial query on the College Media Association listserve, assisted in the creation of a survey questionnaire that would be relevant to media advisers from throughout the nation. A pilot-tested survey questionnaire was uploaded to the software program Psych-Data®, and a link to the survey was sent in an email to recruit participants, using the listservs for College Media Association (formerly College Media Advisers, Inc.), College Broadcasters, Inc. and College Newspaper Business and Advertising Managers. The questionnaire was designed to elicit descriptive statistics regarding current prevalence and role of media advisory boards on U.S.

campuses and to gauge adviser opinion on the role and functions of student media boards. Participants were also asked to send a digital copy of board governing documents for the researcher to conduct a content analysis based on the research questions.

Initial results from the survey showed that most board members were appointed by either faculty, the vice president of student affairs, academic affairs administrators or by other board members themselves. People who serve on student-media boards include students, faculty, administrators, professionals and alumni, with the most common duties of board members being to hire and fire the editor-in-chief, offer advice on equipment purchases, provide feedback on the student media outlet, assist students with skill development and entry into the field, and provide budget or fiscal control and approval. Anywhere from three to 18 members served on the boards of the research respondents.

The terms some advisers used to describe their advisory boards included "Great," "Helpful" and "Rubber Stamp." Only one adviser who had responded as of August 2012 said that the advisory board for its student media had the day-to-day operation of the student media as part of specified duties. While most respondents did have advisory boards, governing board documents were not received from all respondents as requested. While this was disappointing, it wasn't surprising, since governing documents or standard operating procedures aren't always available for student media outlets.

The research-gathering aspect of this study continues, but so far a few comments can be made about student-media advisory boards. Much like all student media, student-media advisory boards are a moving target—there seems to be a wide variety of "models" practiced throughout the nation, with a wide variety of job descriptions. Continual monitoring of the structure and function of student media-advisory boards will help determine student-media boards' current modus operandi. Student editors are wary of advisory boards, while student media advisers may see advisory boards as a positive step in governance. Student journalists sometimes see any "adult" intrusion into the workings of student media as censorship even if the intrusion comes in the form of an advisory board offering only advice. The student perception of the role and scope of advisory boards was beyond the research included in this study with the exception of the interviews from the SPLC reviewed by the researcher, but such research into student attitudes would be a good exercise in the future to gain a

more complete understanding of student-media advisory boards.

While a student publication may have an advisory board, the board may not operate under a governing document or a set of governing documents. Because of the lack of governing documents received in relation to the number of survey respondents, many advisory boards seem to be operating without such documents. This can lead to a difficult and highly unstable advisory board, subject to the whims of the board president or campus administration. Maintaining a codified system of governing documents available for everyone to access could even out the perception of advisory boards from student editors to advisers and make for a more consistent advisory board year after year.

Since student media are still the main gateway students traverse in their quest for internships and jobs (Brandon,

2001), it is important that all of the entities that govern student media, including student media advisory boards, maintain a consistent and reliable presence on campus and in the newsroom. With the changing role of news media in today's society, it would be easy to see how a student-media advisory board could become a weapon to wield against student media, or a shield to protect student media in difficult times. Without the consistency of governing documents, such as constitutions, mission statements and bylaws, advisory boards are more likely to be called into question year after year, losing their effectiveness and credibility among those they serve.

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