PLANNING FOR CURRICULAR CHANGE IN JOURNALISM EDUCATION

Project on the Future of Journalism and Mass Communication Education

School of Journalism
University of Oregon
PLANNING FOR CURRICULAR CHANGE

A Report of the
Project on the Future of Journalism
and Mass Communication Education

Second edition

School of Journalism
University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon
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Preface

When Planning for Curricular Change in Journalism Education appeared in 1984, education for journalism and mass communication was a field in ferment. New programs of study were showing up at colleges and universities that had not before recognized these professional and academic specialties. Old-line programs were immersed in what might be considered a mid-life crisis: what should they be doing as society entered the Information Age, with its rapid technological and social changes? Enrollment in schools and departments of journalism was near an all-time high, placing great strains on resources and heightening a demand for efficiency and innovation.

At the same time these internal challenges were being felt, external voices were influencing the debate. Educators faced a mixed environment in the professional communities. It ranged from ambivalence about the quality and direction of educational programs to indifference, hostility, praise and support.

Enter the Oregon Report, as the Planning for Curricular Change document quickly came to be known. Originally launched as a project intended to bring the curriculum of the School of Journalism at the University of Oregon into line with the needs of faculty and students, the report also became a natural blueprint for evaluation and change across the educational landscape. It offered an assessment of the weaknesses and strengths of journalism and mass communication studies, and a strategic plan to bring these programs into their “rightful place in American higher education.” The report that came out of the two-year study concluded that “The general state of journalism and mass communication education is dismal.” It called for:

- better funding of programs;
- a recognition of the centrality of mass communication study to all university students;
- a larger emphasis on midcareer training of professionals;
- integration of technological advances into all aspects of the teaching program; and
- more coherence in curricula through generic courses that would serve students across the spectrum of career interests.

Copies of the Oregon Report were distributed widely to journalism educators, university administrators and executives in the constituent industries. It became a catalyst for widespread response, discussion and action. The first printing was quickly exhausted.

Did the Oregon Report achieve its goal, to become a blueprint for change? Before going to a second edition (made possible by a grant from the Gannett Foundation, the principal underwriter of the original study), we decided to ask a sampling of prominent journalism educators to respond to that question. They were selected because of both their achievements in educational innovation and the diversity of their vantage points on the institutional spectrum. The eight are:

- Everette E. Dennis, executive director of the Gannett Center for Media Studies, and, as dean of the School of Journalism at Oregon in 1983 and 1984, chief architect of the study.
- Sharon M. Murphy, dean of the College of Journalism at Marquette University and 1986-87 president of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC).
- David Weaver of Indiana University, president-elect of AEJMC for 1987-88.
- Edmund B. Lambeth, associate dean for Graduate Studies, Research and Faculty Development at the University of Missouri School of Journalism, and former dean at the University of Kentucky.
- Travis Linn, dean of the School of Journalism at the University of Nevada-Reno.
- Maxwell McCombs, chairman of the Department of Journalism at the University of Texas at Austin.
- Walter Bunge, director of the School of Journalism at The Ohio State University.
- Jean Ward of the University of Minnesota School of Journalism and Mass Communication, and one of the key participants in the development of the Oregon Report.
They were asked to assess what they see happening today in journalism education, at their own schools and elsewhere. They were also asked to place the Oregon Report in that context to see what, if any, impact the study has had on change in the field.

That epilogue on the Project for the Future of Journalism and Mass Communication will be found in a new Chapter X of the second edition. We at the University of Oregon School of Journalism hope that you find the discussion relevant and useful, and that the Oregon Report continues to provide a stimulus for others as it has for us in the past three years.

Arnold H. Ismach
Dean, School of Journalism
Eugene, Oregon
May, 1987

Additional copies of this report are available at $6.50 each. Please send check payable to “UO Foundation-Journalism” to: School of Journalism
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Project on the Future of Journalism and Mass Communication Education

Purpose: To assess and evaluate the present status and future needs of the nation's schools and departments of journalism and mass communication through a series of studies and by fostering a national debate wherein interested parties may offer a critique.

Goals: To develop notes on a strategic plan for the field that can be useful to individual educators, administrators and schools;
To fashion model curricula for the field that will (a) accommodate and generate new knowledge; (b) accommodate technological change; and (c) be aware of the personnel needs of the communications industries;
To develop a new curriculum to be implemented at the University of Oregon as an outgrowth of the project.

Persons Consulted: All of the nation's accredited schools and departments of journalism and mass communication as well as well-known non-accredited programs;
A selected list of 100 teachers in journalism and mass communication programs representing a range of scholarly and professional interests;
A selected group of 40 scholars from fields outside journalism and mass communication who are concerned with mass communication scholarship or the education and training of communication professionals;
Heads of all professional and industry organizations represented in the Council of Affiliates of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication;
A random sample of University of Oregon alumni from 1920 to 1982;
Nearly 40 industry, professional and scholarly organizations through speeches, workshops and other sessions aimed at encouraging their participation;
50 experts on new communications technology;
15 special consultants to specific topics of interest to the project team—e.g., new technology, curriculum reform, professionalism, etc.;
Scores of unsolicited letters, phone calls and other inquiries that came as a result of articles about the project in various trade papers, industry magazines, professional publications, and popular publications;
Members of the AEJMC Task Force on the Future of Journalism and Mass Communication Education.

The Yield: An archive of materials on the programs of the nation's journalism and mass communication schools;
Historical documents and records about journalism and mass communication education;
A collection of articles, books and monographs that previously addressed journalism and mass communication education;
New data on structural, curricular, economic and other issues from the nation's journalism schools;
New data from industry and professional groups that evaluate and assess journalism and mass communication education;
Scores of letters from thoughtful educators and professionals speculating about the future and proposing solutions;
A comprehensive report on the project with recommendations that will be released in the spring of 1984;
Indication that scores of schools that have made inquiries here for assistance are involved in curriculum reform and revision.
Acknowledgments

We gratefully acknowledge grants of $70,000 from the Gannett Foundation of Rochester, New York, and $16,000 from the Northwest Area Foundation of St. Paul, Minnesota, which made this project possible. The second edition was supported by a grant of $4,000 from the Gannett Foundation. A variety of consultants from journalism education and the communication industries were helpful to us in our studies in connection with the Future Project.

Special thanks go to several persons who were involved in administering the project and in writing various sections of the report. They included Mary S. Hartman, Jeremy Cohen, Gregory Kerber and Willard Rowland. The word processing and production of the report were directed by Etta M. Howard. Roy Paul Nelson designed the cover. Cheryl Dingle managed fiscal matters. Several graduate teaching fellows were involved in the preparation of the studies: They included Steve Dietz, David Morrissey, Gary Kim and Greg Kerber. James Lemert assisted with questionnaire construction.

Members of the journalism faculty at the University of Oregon were involved in discussing the report and critiquing it along the way.

To these persons and others in the journalism/mass communication education and professional fields, we are grateful.
Executive summary

The Future Project is a study of the present status and future direction of learning and the advancement of knowledge in the field of journalism and mass communication within the realities of American higher education. It is assumed that journalism/mass communication schools should be integrated into a college or university where the essential elements of general education are provided by other schools and departments. We agree with the national accreditation standard wherein students take up to 25 percent of their work in journalism and mass communication and 75 percent in the arts and sciences.

The project also operated under the assumption that two principal goals of the journalism/mass communication unit should be the promotion of literacy and the fostering of freedom of expression. The realization of these goals, of course, constitutes a contribution to the university generally.

We believe that journalism and mass communication are central to the functioning of contemporary society and that therefore providing an understanding of journalism and mass communication must be central to the mission of the university. We further believe that the journalism and mass communication unit must be the principal focus of the university’s teaching, research and service activity in this field, because journalism/mass communication schools and the discipline have the strongest and most comprehensive traditions in these areas.

The general state of journalism and mass communication education is dismal. It is a field grossly underfunded, even when compared with other university departments, schools and colleges. Journalism/mass communication units have large, sometimes massive, enrollments, and tiny, overworked faculties, again by standards of the university generally. These units rarely play a major role in the governance of the university and rarely provide persons for the top cadre of leadership.

On matters of structure: We have concluded that the journalism/mass communication unit should ideally be a freestanding professional school reporting to the highest level of university leadership, not subsumed in a liberal arts college structure unless that is the clear preference of a local institution. (The University of Oregon already has this independent structure.)

On the changing mission of the journalism/mass communication unit: At present, undergraduate education is the highest priority, with graduate education second. Service courses to the rest of the university, once an important contribution to general education, have diminished greatly. Research, public service and continuing education are highly valued, if somewhat secondary in importance, at most schools. In the future it is likely that undergraduate education will be de-emphasized somewhat and that continuing education, especially midcareer programs, will be accorded more importance. Graduate education will likely continue at the same or slightly accelerated pace.

On curricular change: The rapid infusion of new knowledge and pace of technological change will push journalism/mass communication schools away from industry-oriented sequence programs and toward more generic mass communication study. Highly specialized approaches will continue in the final year of a student’s program and be extended into graduate and continuing education. Conceptual and craft courses will merge in many instances. Some programs may be realigned along competence and knowledge lines with specific instruction in literacy, visual literacy and computer literacy along with information-gathering; and conceptual courses (media and society, media economics, etc.) will be organized as linchpins to the liberal arts. Specific professional courses need to be organized in coherent modules that have specific outcomes for training stated well in advance and over which students can be tested for competency. Students leaving the university should have personal assessments from faculty that provide them with a suggested continuing education plan to meet their specific needs and deficiencies.

All courses should have a five-year review rule wherein course outlines and plans are submitted voluntarily to outside referees to ask whether the course includes the best of new knowledge, is responsive to technological change and is calibrated to social needs.

On technology matters: The journalism/mass communication unit should organize its technology instruction and education in harmony with other such instruction in the university and should clearly distinguish communication technology issues from the role of technology in society generally. That educational function should be within the purview of other units. Students should get conceptual instruction in the impact and influence of communication technology in society as well as specific hands-on instruction in areas related to entry-level work.
They should also get an overview of the uses of computers and other technology in the communication field. Schools should especially give instruction in data-base use. A technology laboratory for communication education, which-with all its faults—is still the best of its kind in the world and the envy of many other countries and press systems. We hope that readers of this report will remember that its authors are committed and dedicated journalism/mass communication educators who also want to push the field toward excellence. We believe there is ample evidence that the American system of journalism/mass communication education is largely responsible for many notable improvements in the quality of mass communication in this century.

Still, we ourselves felt twinges of guilt in pointing up journalism/mass communication education’s foibles, since we also knew some of the causes. We also know that there are ample positive reviews and many self-congratulatory reports by journalism/mass communication educators available in the professional and scholarly literature. Of the several hundred articles on our field we uncovered, all but a few were either descriptive inventories or ringing defenses. However, we believed—then and now—that our field could not advance if there was not a clear critique of its central dilemmas, be they financial, structural, intellectual or simply human.

The critique that was played out in several trade/industry journals attracted immediate response. Some journalism educators regarded criticism by their peers as inappropriate and unfair. Others said it was too emotional and done without listing the attributes of journalism education. In spite of this response, however, we also received a good deal of support from colleagues and acquaintances both from journalism/mass communication education and from the media industries and professions. Yes, they seemed to agree, it is time for change, and we need a thoughtful inquiry into the field, especially if we can produce the rudiments of a plan for appropriate change.

The critique was not initiated to denigrate journalism/mass communication education; indeed, this study is dedicated to its advancement. Rather, it was an attempt to take into account the changing role of mass communication and the mass media and to inquire into journalism/mass communication education in that context. While some would argue that the news media were always important, there is some indication that the range and scope of their power and influence has accelerated in recent years. Post-industrial society is now called an "information society" wherein more than half of the workforce is concerned with the production of information and the manipulation of symbols. It seemed to us that jour-
communication education, while long concerned with these matters, was poorly poised to take a leadership role in producing tomorrow's communication workers—the modern information workers. As we looked around the country, we saw a communication vacuum, with little knowledge of developments elsewhere. They expressed great enthusiasm for the Future Project at Oregon and are eager to learn of its findings.

Throughout the fact-finding phase of our Project, a working group of faculty members at the University of Oregon School of Journalism has monitored results and discussed implications, especially for curricular change. In addition, our planning project funded by the Northwest Area Foundation was joined with a longer-term implementation grant from the Gannett Foundation, which has allowed for several additional and more extensive studies. In 1983, the dean of the School at Oregon was elected to the presidency of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication and appointed a National Task Force on the Future of Journalism and Mass Communication that worked with and relied upon the work of the Oregon Future Project in its deliberations. This gave greater national scope to the project and attracted considerable interest.

In addition to a faculty retreat and frequent meetings of the working group, a national summit on the future of journalism and mass communication was held at the University of Oregon in January, 1984, with some 30 leading scholars, administrators and media professionals participating.

The national task force meeting heard the central findings of the project and debated many key issues and perspectives. Participants agreed strongly that journalism/mass communication education must rely on a strong relationship with the liberal arts and sciences. They also agreed that since mass communication is central to society itself, universities must give more attention to this vital study and discipline. In short, they proposed that learning and the advancement of mass communication become central to the mission of the university, a position it does not now enjoy.

Beyond this advisory role the national task force did not go, and they were not asked to vote on or agree with any of the findings of this report. What appears here are exclusively the conclusions of the Oregon Project.

We began this project with the goal of developing guidelines for a new curriculum essentially for ourselves but with the hope that our findings might be useful to the nation's other journalism and mass communications schools. This was done with full knowledge that these schools are diverse programs and that any "model curriculum" would need to have several alternative approaches to reflect the diversity of approaches, philosophies and goals of various programs. What we had not fully anticipated was that the project would be a lightning rod for a national debate on the goals and purposes of journalism education. Indeed, this debate, reported in various industry journals and carried in the newsletter of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, may be an important additional benefit of the Future Project.

While we are in this report addressing issues and problems internal to journalism and mass communication education, it should be noted that we have operated under the assumption that undergraduate instruction in journalism and mass communication should exist in a university environment where students take the bulk of their course work in fields other than journalism. We are in agreement with the national accreditation standard that requires undergraduate students to take 75 percent of their work in the arts and sciences. These guidelines include specific humanities, social science and science components, with some latitude for individual schools to determine particular weightings.

The report that follows examines a variety of questions involving the structure of journalism and mass communication units in American higher education, the changing mission of the journalism/mass communication school, curricular issues and problems, technology issues as they affect the mass communication field, faculty and staffing, the student clientele and several other related matters.

This report includes summary material from our studies of journalism/mass communications administration, selected faculty members in journalism/mass communication schools, scholars in outside fields, leaders of the mass communication industries and professional societies, a special analysis of technology concerns and some recommendations.

The next phase of our activity will include implementation of some of these recommendations at Oregon as well as continued action and planning at the national level through the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication to bring curricular reform to the field generally.
I. A reflective self-study

The faculty and dean of the University of Oregon School of Journalism engaged in a thoughtful self-study during 1981 and 1982 just prior to initiation of work on the Future of Journalism and Mass Communication Education Project reported here. This was done partly as preparation for this curricular study and partly in connection with our national professional school accreditation. The purpose of the self-study was to examine the School’s historic and continuing goals and to assess the quality of the journalism program at Oregon. The self-study reaffirmed the School’s seven principal objectives:

1. To provide professional course work designed to prepare students for careers in the various fields of mass communication;
2. To provide course offerings of interest and value to students in the University who are not journalism majors;
3. To support and encourage research in the various fields of mass communication;
4. To maintain a mutually constructive and helpful liaison with mass-communication professionals;
5. To provide opportunities for the continuing education of journalism professionals in the various fields of mass communication;
6. To bring about improvement in the performance of the mass media; and
7. To encourage improvement in scholastic journalism programs and publications in secondary schools.

The goals and objectives of the School center on learning and the advancement of knowledge in journalism and mass communication. They are directed to the needs of the School’s clientele, including:

1. Undergraduate and graduate students in journalism and mass communication;
2. Other students at the University of Oregon who wish to take journalism and communication courses;
3. Communications professionals seeking continuing education;
4. Other college, community college and secondary school programs in journalism and their students and faculty; and
5. The general public, especially citizens concerned about the impact and the role of mass communication.

The Oregon journalism school, like many of its sister institutions in the United States, is plagued by serious and longstanding underfunding. This is not just a typical educator’s lament, but a description of the real state of affairs in journalism schools that are profit centers for their colleges and universities because of their escalating enrollments, but rarely share in the bounty of funds which those students generate.

Another of the problems common to all professional schools is the relationship between new knowledge generated by systematic research and new knowledge that comes from the world of professional practice. The field of journalism education has long been beset by a conflict between faculty members who regard themselves primarily as teachers and researchers and those who identify themselves as masters of the profession—practitioners who are also teachers. While the schism between research-oriented scholars and educators who are professional practitioners is pronounced at some schools, it is not a significant problem at Oregon. The Oregon faculty generally is highly productive in generating original research and texts that break new ground, or both. They also are involved in continuing service to the media industries and professional practitioners as well as to particular constituent groups with an interest in the press or mass media. However, the notion that craft courses adhere to professional standards set by the industry and that conceptual courses are governed by the realm of scholarship is still a persistent pattern.

The original proposal for a planning grant noted three interrelated problems for the somewhat stagnant journalism school curriculum in the so-called "steady state" university where, because of static budgets, change is hardly encouraged. New knowledge must be monitored and integrated into the curriculum. New technology must be addressed. In the midst of what has been called a communication revolution, journalism schools must give their students utilitarian information about the state of the art in technology that will affect communications, both from the standpoint of its social impact and practical "hands-on" experience. Finally, the communication industries needs for educated personnel as well as society’s needs for educated citizens who know and understand mass communication must be recognized and dealt with. The existing journalism school curriculum at Oregon does not really do this in any systematic way. The paradigm of journalism education has not changed much in 50 years despite massive changes throughout the field of mass communication.
II. The Oregon program in a national context

Journalism schools, like their parent institutions of higher education, come in several types, sizes and shapes. Large-scale, comprehensive units offer quite modest in scope, offer only limited undergraduate study; (3) private liberal arts colleges that are usually small, premium-quality institutions that lean toward a classical liberal arts approach; and (4) community colleges that generally offer vocationally oriented two-year programs designed either to send people immediately into the work force or to prepare them for senior colleges and universities.

Schools of journalism and mass communication usually follow a similar pattern. A typology of journalism/mass communication programs and the colleges and universities with which they are associated is shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of journalism and mass communication programs</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Institutional Setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive journalism/mass communication unit</td>
<td>Undergraduate, master's, doctoral programs of scholarly and professional interest, sub-programs, usually industry-oriented, institutes and research centers</td>
<td>Minnesota, Wisconsin, Indiana, North Carolina</td>
<td>Freestanding school organized within liberal arts college</td>
<td>Research university; in rare instances, state college or university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication studies</td>
<td>Mass communication studies in context of a generic communications program; little professional instruction</td>
<td>Michigan, Harvard, Stanford, Annenberg Schools at Penn., So. Cal.</td>
<td>Arts and Sciences college; college of professional studies</td>
<td>Research university or state college/professional school; private liberal arts college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate professional school</td>
<td>Preparation of professionals for specific industry roles such as reporters, editors, broadcast specialists</td>
<td>Columbia, Northwestern, UC Berkeley</td>
<td>Freestanding professional school</td>
<td>Traditional research university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate professional school</td>
<td>Preparation of professionals for entry-level media work; industry-oriented</td>
<td>Nebraska, California state universities</td>
<td>Arts and Sciences colleges; professional school div.</td>
<td>State colleges; research universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community college</td>
<td>Vocational craft courses; preparation of entry-level workers in two years</td>
<td>Community, junior colleges; other two-year programs</td>
<td>Separate departments, part of English or other department</td>
<td>Community colleges</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The University of Oregon School of Journalism is a well-established, comprehensive journalism and mass communication program. Founded in 1912 as the Department of Journalism, Oregon became a full professional school in 1916, making it one of the four or five oldest such programs in the United States. The School has five accredited sequences recognized by the American Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, which is sanctioned by the U.S. Office of Education. Oregon is one of only about 10 journalism schools in the United States accredited in as many as five fields. Oregon's accreditation includes sequences in news-editorial journalism, magazine journalism, advertising, public relations and broadcast news.

Although Oregon does not have a Ph.D. program in mass communication, its master's degree program trains two distinct student clienteles: those interested in a professional master's program in preparation for careers in the news media and those interested in scholarship and research. Students in the latter program usually go on to doctoral programs elsewhere or enter industry in research departments or government in policy-making roles. In fact, the M.A. program has comprehensive course requirements and all students take both theory/research courses and professional/practice courses. Students with a more scholarly orientation write master's theses, while those who are more professionally oriented do professional projects or take comprehensive exams.

Oregon is known for its especially strong news-editorial and advertising programs, and these two programs get the bulk of the School's resources. Both have achieved considerable national distinction and are directed by highly qualified and prestigious faculty members. The magazine and broadcast news units are relatively small and have limited goals for training a specific type of professional (e.g., broadcast news reporters). The public relations sequence has relatively few courses and draws heavily on courses in the other sequences.

Like most other comprehensive journalism-education programs, the Oregon School has both craft and conceptual courses. The organizational structure is designed to support the various sequences with some modest emphasis on shared courses. For example, all students, whether their primary interest is in news/editorial, broadcasting, public relations, advertising or magazine, are required to take two out of the three following courses—law of the press, history of journalism, and journalism and public opinion. The implicit rationale is that these courses fill certain generic needs important to everyone interested in communications.

A major concern of the School is literacy training, to which considerable time is devoted. All students are required to take Introduction to Journalistic Writing (unless they pass a mandatory waiver/placement examination). After completing this course, which covers basic principles of writing, such as grammar and mechanics, students choose from a wide variety of writing courses that focus on medium-specific styles. Students in advertising take courses such as advertising copywriting and advanced message strategy. Broadcast students concentrate on writing appropriate to radio and television.

Clearly, many of the writing courses are medium-specific, although many students take a broader approach in choosing their courses with the understanding that increasingly today's media overlap in their approaches to function and style. The faculty encourages this generic approach for its students; however, in recent years, pressure from those who establish accreditation standards has been directed at encouraging a more fragmented approach in which students have little time to take courses outside their specific sequences.

Essentially, the problem is that journalism schools tend to operate on an industry model. That is, students are taught the entry-level skills they will need to secure their first jobs in a single, specific communication industry such as newspaper or broadcasting. Reliance on the industry model, however, does not give students the sufficient understanding of the media as a whole that they will need to advance later in their careers. An alternative approach would be to use a generic model of journalism/mass communication education. Amidst a communications revolution outside of the university, journalism schools need a clear, orderly way to accommodate at least three concurrent developments that cut across all of the traditional industry-oriented sequences:

1. (The massive growth of knowledge from a variety of scholarly and professional sources that alters our understanding of journalism and mass communications;

2. (Breath-taking technological change wherein the computer, the microchip, the satellite and other devices are changing society and the communications industry; and
III. Status report: The administrative view

Planning for the future of journalism and mass communication requires considerable knowledge of the relevant environment, the context against which individual programs and the field generally operate. The more than 90 colleges and universities in the United States with accredited journalism and mass communication programs. Several others of high standing choose not to be accredited. At least some of the programs are highly theoretical in their approach to education. Nevertheless, because of the common goals and standards that are encouraged by the accreditation process and by various scholarly and professional organizations, the nation's journalism schools do constitute an identifiable component of higher education.

In order to get a better understanding of the nature, scope, concerns and problems of journalism education, the Future Project systematically surveyed the administrators of the 91 accredited programs and several others of importance that were not on the accredited list. Administrators (deans, chairpersons, directors) were contacted because they are the most knowledgeable individuals with an overview of their own programs and have access to data that may not be available to individual faculty members.

Eighty-two of the questionnaires directed to administrators were returned, a 91 percent response rate. In addition, several administrators wrote lengthy letters amplifying the inquiries made in the questionnaire. The result is a fairly complete national profile of journalism education in the United States, at least with regard to the questions raised here.

The survey addressed five areas of concern, namely:

1. The placement of the journalism/mass communication unit (school or department) within the larger university or college. The literature of the sociology of organizations suggests that the "structure is the message" and that a school's status and functioning are largely determined by where it is placed in the larger organization. We wanted to know whether the journalism schools were freestanding units, part of a college of professional studies, or somewhere else in the organizational pattern. We hoped to elicit some opinions about the "ideal structure" as it pertains to the culture and tradition of a particular educational institution.

2. The internal organizational patterns of the journalism/mass communication unit. How was it organized and to do what? Some schools are unified programs without subdivisions; other have a sequence structure. Some have departmentalized along industry lines; others opt for generic or conceptual approaches. We asked the administrators to reflect on their structure and evaluate its effectiveness and efficiency. We also asked them if there was a better way to do it or whether they, in their own place, saw any organizational changes that would better advance the cause of journalism education in an era of swift change.

3. The primary goals of the journalism/mass communication unit both now and in the future. This part of the survey elicited information about the program's general mandate, the constituents it serves, the values of the educator/administrator with regard to setting priorities for the use of educational resources for journalism/mass communication purposes.

4. The curriculum now in place in journalism/mass communication units. How is it organized? Toward what end? How is it coping with social change and what has been its recent history of substantive curricular change?

5. Changes that journalism/mass communication educators would like to implement. Here we asked the administrators to dream a bit, to speculate (without regard to resources) what they'd like to do, what kind of programs they would implement under optimistic conditions that would address future needs and demands.

Journalism/Mass Communication in Higher Education

Where and how a journalism or communication program is organized within a college or university determines in large part what role it will play in the university and what resources it can command. Structure may also be related to status. Imagine,
for example, the difference between a law depart-
ment in a college of professional studies and a law
place that a will probably determine in large part its philosophi-

departments that are part of colleges of liberal arts
and science within the larger university compete

science and mathematics in the scramble for re-

their competitors.

changed their designation to "journalism and mass

for the term "media studies" or simply "communi-

which now call themselves "communication arts"

academic programs beyond the scope of news-edito-

and informational functions. The term "jour-

and "mass communication" to reflect their concern with

with advertising and public relations,

nalism and mass communication was a useful

Some programs have opted

"journalism and mass communication is akin to

several campus competitors who also concern them-

which includes the

The independent professional school or college usually,

which are almost independent pro-

but they are like—and excel—in the company of

Where is your program located in the organization of your university or college?

Independent Professional School

— 21 responses or 25%

School within Liberal Arts Unit

— 14 responses or 17%

Department within Liberal Arts Unit

— 28 responses or 35%

School within Professional Studies Unit

— 7 responses or 9%

Department within Professional Studies Unit

— 6 responses or 7%

Elsewhere

— 81 responses to this question.

The independent professional school or college, although not always, reports to central ad-

administration: to a provost, academic vice president,
or in some instances, directly to the president of

The lack of independent status for journalism/mass

communication programs may carry inherent

problems such as the inability to get adequate

financing, staffing, and physical resources. Perhaps

the most serious drawback to a lack of independent

status is the problem of enrollment controls. Jour-

nalism/mass communication units can better deter-
mine the admission of students and the curriculum

Jour-

Joint cross-listed courses

Faculty on graduate committees in other units

The importance of obtaining and maintaining

resources.

In what other ways does your program maintain links with the rest of the institution? (check as many as apply)

Joint appointments

— 63 responses or 70%

Cross-listed courses

— 52 responses or 63%

Faculty on graduate committees in other units

— 77 responses or 93%

Joint programs/Interdisciplinary programs

— 35 responses or 42%

Dual majors

— 60 responses or 78%

Faculty on important committees

— 77 responses or 93%

Other

— 14 responses or 17%

Jour-

Joint cross-listed courses

Faculty on graduate committees in other units

Joint programs/Interdisciplinary programs

Dual majors

Faculty on important committees

Other
Departmental Administration

In contrast to university-wide administration, journalism/mass communication faculty members take an active role in the administration of their own units. Rarely did the survey find that faculty were not involved in departmental policy. The table below provide a summary of faculty activities within departmental administration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How is your faculty involved in the administrative/policy work of your program? (Check as many as apply)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular faculty meetings - 79 responses or 95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular sequence or subgroup meetings - 51 responses or 61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standing/ad hoc committees - 60 responses or 83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotating administrative appointments - 14 responses or 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty rarely in administrative work - 10 responses or 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty rarely in policy matters - 2 responses or 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other - 7 responses or 8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The survey also attempted to identify what deans and chairpersons would consider to be an "ideal" administrative structure within their own units. The responses from the front suggest two things. First, journalism/mass communication departments are under heavy siege and need reinforcements in the form of assistant deans, administrative assistants and other such "support" personnel. And second, departmental administrative structure, at least in the minds of those responding to the survey, is interlinked with curricular questions. Should broadcasting be taught within a school of journalism? What is the proper mix among traditional skill-acquisition courses, conceptual courses such as press law and media economics, and theory-based coursework such as mass media research and methodology? The survey spawned what can best be described as a plea for more staff, but few addressed directly the question of what an ideal administrative structure should look like within a journalism/mass communication unit. Those who did address the issue often focused on a theme succinctly stated by Dean Donald G. Hileman at the University of Tennessee College of Communications. "Separate college status," Hileman said, "is vital to maximum development."

Gerald C. Stone, chairman, of the Department of Journalism at Memphis State University, said the "ideal program in journalism education will include departments in advertising, broadcasting, broad- cast news, magazine, mass communication, newspaper, photojournalism, public relations, and perhaps technical physics." Many schools appear to approach the question with a response that seems to label various curriculum units, something which is now the standard practice at colleges of journalism or communication. At Missouri, the student newspaper, a community daily, is also administratively responsible to the dean.

Some administrators strongly disagree with this model, suggesting that having wide-ranging media operations under the journalism unit is clearly undesirable. At Missouri, student presses and printing operations are also reported to the journalism unit. This is rarely true today.

Some schools use the student newspaper for laboratory experience for their students, while others opt for the independent student press model, which is distinctive and separate from the journalism/mass communication unit.

If there is an ideal structure, it is the one that works for a particular department or school within the confines of its own campus environment. It is a structure that allows the journalism/mass community unit to carry out its educational mission—which includes teaching, service and research—in the most supportive and efficient way. It means getting a fair share of the resources of the university, enough to carry out and shape the programs offered in the journalism/mass communication unit. And, one hopes, a biproduct of an ideal structure is prestige and status within the university and outside. Naturally, this should be determined by the quality of the program, the faculty and the students was well as such factors as alumni achievement and professional relationships. But none of these can truly flourish in a structural arrangement that strangles the journalism unit, treats it like a stepchild or prohibits its members even in a de facto fashion from full participation in the leadership ranks of the institution.

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Clearly the dream of an ideal administrative structure is a notion that sparked many responses, but just as clearly those responses were fuzzy when it came to specifics. The responses suggest that the "ideal" administrative structure of a journalism/mass communication unit must take into account at least two elements. First, the curriculum itself may dictate certain systems with needs for specialized curricula in curriculum, academic planning, advising, institutional policy, and outside projects such as internships and relations with local media. Second, the structure must fit within the framework of the host institution. There are clear advantages to an independent unit from the standpoint of resource management, control of curriculum and selection of students and faculty.

The "ideal" administrative structure of a journalism/mass communication unit could not be identified from the survey. But the survey does suggest that such a structure is an important element of the educational process that has received too little systematic study in the past and that many administrators would welcome a new choice of models that might be applicable to their unique situations.

Our analysis suggests that either our survey instrument did not clearly present the issues to the journalism/mass communication administrators or that those many have given little thought to the distinction between how a journalism/mass communication unit should be structured as opposed to how it should be administered.

The Goals of Journalism/Mass Communication Education

What do journalism/mass communication deans and chairpersons see as their primary charge? The survey, not surprisingly, found strong agreement that undergraduate education is the number-one goal. The following two tables illustrate the responses of educators as to how the traditional functions of journalism/mass communication education in terms of their own schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating (averaged)</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Undergraduate education</td>
<td>73 4 1 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Graduate education</td>
<td>4 9 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Service to communication industries/constituencies</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Advancement of knowledge through research</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Continuing/midcareer education</td>
<td>4 11 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They provided nothing to suggest that undergraduate education will not remain the most vital element of American journalism/mass communication schools. About one-half of the respondents, in fact, said they were not inclined to change this situ-
debated whether journalism education is more appropriately a graduate or undergraduate endeavor.

Undergraduate level has long been the subject of debate within the field. Although the field began as an undergraduate endeavor, Columbia, one of the most prestigious schools, dropped its undergraduate program in 1935, opting for a one-year master's program. The University of California at Berkeley also operates in this mode. Most schools have both undergraduate programs and professional master's or theoretically oriented master's or doctoral degrees. The professional master's is more in the tradition of the M.B.A. degree with an emphasis on professional development for a specific career in the field. The more theoretically oriented master's emphasizes research and conceptual knowledge of the field over professional practice. Some persons in these programs continued to study for the Ph.D., but most enter the communications field in a wide variety of assignments.

Open-ended comments from the deans and chairs indicate a strong interest in strengthening three areas. Increased involvement in midcareer and continuing education sparked significant interest. As Mark Popovich, chairman of the Journalism Department at Ball State University, put it, "I would hope our professionals would continue to seek knowledge and stay abreast of everyday happenings. Our journalism schools should be able to show them how to continue to do so. Our schools should be retreats for our profession. Some persons in these programs continued to study for the Ph.D., but most enter the communications field in a wide variety of assignments." There was also interest in increasing emphasis on graduate education and on the research component of undergraduate education. It is significant to note that only one educator saw the need to actively increase the emphasis on involvement with the community and with professionals.

There is already significant involvement with the community. Educators do not consider this to be an important function of their schools. Or, educators have been turned off for one reason or another by their experiences in this area. The area clearly deserves some follow-up.

Program Mission: Unique Characteristics

The functions of an individual journalism/mass communication program are related, of course, to the clientele and to the constituency served. It is also connected to the school's mandate, especially its geographic mandate. A school that sees itself as international in its orientation does different things than a school that sees itself mainly serving the vocational training needs of a local community. Geographic mandate is also related strongly to reputation. Various reputation studies conducted over the years by Change Magazine and other organizations concerned with journalism/mass communication schools' reputations either with educators or professionals invariably give highest marks to institutions that have national or international concerns, as opposed to those that serve a more limited area. Such ratings, of course, may have little to do with the present quality of a program. The flaws inherent in such studies are well-known. In regard to the geographic mandate, those surveyed responded as indicated in the following table.

What is the primary geographical constituency of your program?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>38 percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>29 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination</td>
<td>25 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of the journalism/mass communication units surveyed was asked to describe the attributes that made its program unique because of the way it defines its mission. Few schools, it appears, could actually be described as unique.

Several programs believed they were unique because of their internships or "real world" programs. Others felt they were distinctive because of specialization in community journalism, international journalism, science and environmental reporting, agricultural reporting and urban reporting. Some programs stressed their "hands-on" programs made possible by on-campus newspapers, television stations and radio stations. Some mentioned their midcareer, continuing education, or research emphasis. Two mentioned their attention to theory and research. Two schools—Florida A&M at Tallahassee and Howard University—said they were distinctive because they emphasized the training of minority students.

The question becomes: What actually distinguishes a journalism/mass communication program? Although the survey suggests few schools are truly unique, the potential exists for schools to distinguish themselves in numerous areas. For example, a school such as the University of Oregon might well want to consider a program of environmental reporting. Oregon's natural resources and committee to the environment make such a program appropriate. Northwestern with its Chicago location pioneered a program in urban journalism while Marquette has worked in religious journalism. Oregon is already developing coursework on the Pacific Rim and other schools might learn from this example. The original idea for such specialization can be traced back to Midwestern schools specializing in agricultural journalism that began half a century ago.

Faculty Interests, Qualification

Here survey data do not fully point up the lack of distinctiveness of most journalism/mass communication programs. Courses are so similar to courses in many other schools as to be nearly interchangeable. While research interests of faculties often reflect distinctive personal interests or characteristics of the community where the university is located, there are relatively few specialized or unique programs that truly distinguish an individual journalism/mass communication program. When asked in more descriptive letters to identify unique characteristics of their program that truly distinguished it from others in the United States, few administrators could offer comment. One very frank answer simply said, "Nothing here is distinctive, unique or distinguishable from anything anywhere else."

Clearly this is an area that needs investigation. Does it mean that programs are nearly uniform and therefore not serving the special needs of their constituencies? Or does it mean that "journalism is journalism," as one dean said, and that courses, philosophical orientation and faculty interests are rather homogeneous in the field? Here a full understanding of similarities and differences in various programs is essential. Obviously it is important for some commonality to exist; otherwise, there is no unified field of interest. At the same time, student needs, faculty interests, regional characteristics and other factors ought to operate to give any creative faculty and school a distinctive imprint, one that represents a particular approach to subject matter, offering of specific, and other unique methods of instruction or other factors.

An important attribute of journalism/mass communication education more easily identified than "unique" program aspects is faculty interests and qualifications. A key toward understanding the types of self-identified goals and missions of journalism education is likely to be found in the types of educators within the field. The typology below identifies the frequency of four categories of journalism/mass communication educator.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strong research interest</th>
<th>Weak research interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong professional experience</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak professional experience</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The remaining 7 percent were categorized under the type, "other." "Other" was variously self-described as having strong interests in continuing education, no experience to speak of but a good teacher, and, in one case, "outdated professional experience and so little interest to research." The administrator who made this comment added, "If directors/chairs were candied, I think you would find similar problems in many programs."

One measure of journalism/mass communication education is to examine the categories of courses that have been added to programs over the last five years. Every school surveyed had added courses they described as unique, and qualified as conceptual in nature. This grouping included courses such as law of the press, women and media, ethics and international press systems. In the skills/craft area, 70 schools added courses within the last five years. Many of these were in the area of broadcast and video technology such as electronic reporting and videocassette editing.

While most of the new courses do not from their titles appear to be new or unique offerings on the national level, a few are worth special mention. There is no suggestion here that these courses mark the beginning of a trend. They do, however, indicate the acceptance at some schools that there are important craft and conceptual areas that need further attention. These courses included the following:

- Computer-based media planning
- Newspaper management
- Telecommunications policy
- Videotex, videotex, and new technologies
- Legal and social aspects of advertising
- Publishing and management of the media

The addition of a few courses is not the only change apparent in journalism/mass communication programs over the past five years. The chart below indicates that every program had either made some changes or was in the process of doing so.
The survey did not provide a definitive answer as to what motivated the various changes, but some indicators were identified. A number of programs cited the requirements for accreditation as their motive for instituting a number of journalism classes required for graduation. The responses from five of the schools are especially representative of a national problem when it reported a reduction in the use of traditional sequences in favor of the development of a new curriculum that has both competency training and conceptual components that are generic in nature, moving away from the traditional industry-oriented sequence structure. In the professional area, rather than training students specifically in newspaper reporting in the early phases of the academic program, students instead get courses in developing media messages, and information gathering. Conceptual courses emphasize the common thread of law, history and ethics through case study courses.

Although there may be some rare pockets of innovation, the administrators we contacted seemed distressed by the need to keep up with the hardware in the field. Others said they feared becoming too technologically bound to the detriment of other concerns. The journalism/mass communication school. What was clearly lacking was any sophisticated effort to distinguish communication industry technology and that affecting mass communicators from technological studies elsewhere in the University. There was a similar inability to itemize the need for students to know and understand the impact of technology in a variety of conceptual courses that could be linked effectively to coursework elsewhere in the university curriculum.

Some schools did have some emphasis on the use of technology and were trying to give their students the rudiments of "hands-on" experience necessary for survival in entry-level jobs. There is relatively little computer-assisted instruction in the journalism schools, almost no concern with access to data bases. There is much more interest in administrative uses of computers for office operations among administrators.

Ten programs pointed to the teaching of media management courses as innovative additions to journalism/mass communication education. And a number of respondents indicated agreement with attempts to knock down the walls between communication-research and craft courses, such as the program now being instituted at Texas. There was a similar inability to itemize the technology in a variety of conceptual courses that could be linked effectively to coursework elsewhere in the university.

The quality of schools is one element that received comment. Both Stanford and the University of Arkansas favor reducing student enrollments. Similarly, Dean Albert T. Scroggins at the University of South Carolina said, "I would support fewer schools but better ones." Two elements are inherent in the discussion of enrollments and schools. First, there is a possibility that because resources are pegged directly to enrollment in most cases, journalism/mass communication schools have opened their doors wider than they should. The second problem has continued to grow in popularity since the late 1960s, yet neither educational resources nor the job market has kept pace. And second, there is the ultimate question of quality. Faculty have taken on tremendous teaching loads in addition to university service, community and research responsibilities.

Can the quality of teaching remain high when faculty are pushed to their limits? Interest in changing or updating the primary charge of journalism/mass communication education also was evident in the survey from the respondents referred to the need to meet the challenges not only of journalism as we have known it, but of the information society that is now in its infancy.

Professor Sandra Ernst Mortuary at Michigan State University commented extensively on the problem. Essentially, Mortuary said that changes in the technology have gone too far and that greater than the need to teach students to work on video display terminals. "It will take a massive educational ef-
fort," she said, "to move people from being passive viewers to sorters and selectors. New courses will be taught to use extensive data banks just as we focus on such skills as learn (poorly) to use libraries. Media courses will be delivered to majors in the future. "Majors will be a combination of databanks.

Moriarty sees a broadening of skills that must be delivered to journalism/mass communication programs and of about 40 from other (related) fields.

Letters aimed at eliciting opinions, views, suggestions and projections about the field were sent to both groups of professors—a list of more than 100 from the journalism/mass communication programs and of about 40 from other (related) fields.

Bogart, a pioneer in mass communications research and now Executive Vice President and General Manager of the Newspaper Advertising Bureau, Inc., said, "I would be inclined to reduce the communication-journalism 25 percent share of the undergraduate curriculum to 15 percent and to substitute composition, literature and social science."

Others expressed sentiments similar to Bogart's. Benjamin Compaire is Executive Director for the Program on Information Resources Policy at Harvard University. His comments deserved significant analysis.

It is my view that in an increasingly complex world, the most important education for prospective journalists is an understanding of how to think, how to analyze and how to express themselves. Most, if not all of this, can be