2018-2019 JMC Assessment Report

Prepared August 24, 2019 by Dr. Chance York, Assistant Professor
Executive Summary

Each year a designated faculty coordinator in Kent State University’s School of Journalism and Mass Communication (JMC) conducts a program-level curriculum, learning, and career outcomes assessment of the School. The goal of this assessment is to:

**Learn about how we, as a faculty, can improve our teaching**, with an eye toward applying what we’ve learned in our classrooms to benefit our students; and,

**To meet the rigorous accreditation standards** set by the University and our national accrediting body, the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism & Mass Communication (ACEJMC; see Appendix I).

Below is a summary of several key takeaways from this year’s assessment effort:

1. **First-Year Experience Exam (FYEE) and Graduating Senior Exit Exam (GSEE)**. This multiple-choice exam administered to incoming freshmen and graduating senior cohorts continues to yield valuable insights about JMC students’ conceptual learning. This year, the results indicated:
   a. Graduating seniors averaged a passing “C” grade on the exam, whereas freshmen scored an overall 50% “F.” These average scores are indicative of programmatic learning in areas such as media law, ethics, writing, research, and domestic and global diversity.
   b. Senior Digital Media Production (DMP) students continue to score lower on the GSEE than do their Advertising, Journalism, and Public Relation counterparts.
   c. However, in terms of specific competency areas, DMP majors score high marks on the “Digital Technology and Tools” competency, whereas seniors in other majors do not.

2. **Culminating Experience Team Assessment (CETA)**. Professional reviewers external to JMC continued to provide positive evaluations of our students’ senior capstone coursework. The CETA is designed to provide insights on how well our students learn and apply *practical skills*. This year an analysis of reviewer feedback led to the following takeaways:
   a. JMC capstone coursework continues to lack attention to detail, which is reflected in superficial analysis, typos and writing errors, and a lack of focus or purpose. This is the third year in a row that reviewers have noted this issue.
   b. Reviewers also noted problems with the depth and successful application of research insights in capstone coursework.
   c. Unlike last year, reviewers said visual elements in capstone coursework met or exceeded their expectations. This may indicate we are “closing the loop” or improving curriculum and instruction with regard to visuals.
3. **JMC Alumni Survey.** A total of 343 JMC alumni took this survey. They were asked to rate their perceptions of our School and provide updates on their employment status and annual incomes. There were several key insights from this annual survey:
   a. As in previous years, JMC alumni continue to possess positive evaluations of their educational experience. Overall, 58.60% of alumni rated their education as “Excellent” and 32.07% said it was “Good.” Former DMP majors gave the lowest ratings by major.
   b. Of those surveyed, 37.43% said they currently hold full-time employment in a JMC-related profession. Another 31.58% said they hold full-time employment in a field outside JMC.
   c. In terms of income, 13.25% of alumni said they made $25,000 or less annually; 30.80% reported making between $25,001 and 55,000; 25.83% reported $55,001 and 85,000; and a sizeable 30.13% of alumni reported making $85,000 or more annually.

**What Do Students Learn? Comparing the First Year Experience Exam (FYEE) with the Graduating Senior Exit Exam (GSEE)**
INTRODUCTION
We use the First-Year Experience Exam (FYEE) and Graduating Senior Exit Exam (GSEE) to measure programmatic learning in JMC.

The FYEE and GSEE refer to the same set of simple, multiple-choice exam questions administered to incoming freshmen and graduating seniors (see Appendix II).

Exam questions were derived from an exam made available by ACEJMC. The exam questions are designed to assess knowledge of ACEJMC basic values and competency areas (e.g. media law) rather than more specialized, sequence-level knowledge in journalism and mass communication.

This past year, the assessment coordinator had instructors administer an online version of the FYEE in first-year experience classrooms. A complete list of graduating seniors was obtained from the Kent State CCI advising staff. This list was used to email the GSEE to all seniors planning to graduate in Spring 2018, Summer 2018, or Fall 2019.

In total, 169 freshmen and 38 seniors completed the exam.

RESULTS
In terms of overall exam results, the figures below show the average percent of correct answers on the exam for freshmen (left) and seniors (right).

As the figure clearly demonstrates, the bulk of freshmen scores in the .40 to .60 (40 to 60% correct) range on the exam. The majority of graduating seniors scores .7 to .9 (70 to 90% correct) on the exam. Thus, the distributions alone indicate knowledge differences between cohorts.
Freshmen who took the exam answered, on average, about 18 questions correctly out of 35. This equates to a 50% average exam score, or an “F” on a traditional grading scale.

Graduating seniors answered approximately 26 questions correctly out of 35. This is equivalent to a 75% “C” average.

There were also notable differences between freshmen and senior scores in specific value and competency areas. One of the competencies students learned the most in was media history. Freshmen who took the exam scored an average of 49% on media history questions. Seniors scored 82% on average. This is a 33-point difference in average media history exam scores. Based on comparisons of average scores, students also learned a great deal in media ethics, global diversity, and media theory.

Students learned the least in statistics and numerical concepts. This is a finding consistent with those of previous reports. It is perhaps a reflection of a lack of focus on statistics and numeracy in the curriculum. Students also gained relatively little in the media research and critical thinking competency areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency Area</th>
<th>FYEE Fall 2018 (Average % Correct)</th>
<th>GSEE Spring 2019 (Average % Correct)</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Ranked Gains in Averages, Freshman to Senior Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>2024</td>
<td>Change</td>
<td>Order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>+24%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>+33%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>+28%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>+22%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>+15%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>+21%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Evaluation</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>+28%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics/Numeracy</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>+15%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>+27%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>+31%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Diversity</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>+24%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Diversity</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>+31%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total %</strong></td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>+25%</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally, it is worth noting differences in programmatic learning by the student’s major. Below I plot average exam scores for incoming freshmen and graduating seniors by major area of concentration.

As in previous years, ANOVA tests show there are no significant differences in exam scores among incoming JMC freshmen $F(3) = 0.35, p = 0.79$. For example, freshmen who have declared to be a Digital
Media Production (DMP) major score no differently on the exam than do Journalism majors. However, there are significant differences in scores among graduating seniors $F(3) = 4.66, p = 0.008$. Post-hoc tests show the largest mean differences in GSEE scores emerge between DMP (59% correct average) and advertising (75% correct), journalism (81% correct) and public relations (83% correct).

A table showing the exact scores on the exam by major area is below. Note the trivial differences in average scores by major among freshmen and the emerging gaps between seniors.

In addition, DMP students had a relatively small “gain” in knowledge of 7% comparing average exam scores across cohorts. Conversely, senior PR and Journalism students scored, on average, greater than 30% better on the exam than are their freshmen counterparts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Freshmen Average % Score</th>
<th>Senior Average % Score</th>
<th>Average Difference (Gain)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>52% (n = 11)</td>
<td>75% (n = 3)</td>
<td>+23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Media Production</td>
<td>52% (n = 53)</td>
<td>59% (n = 10)</td>
<td>+7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalism</td>
<td>49% (n = 77)</td>
<td>81% (n = 15)</td>
<td>+32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations</td>
<td>50% (n = 26)</td>
<td>83% (n = 10)</td>
<td>+33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notably, these results are almost identical to those in last year’s report.

The takeaway is that while there are few differences in knowledge among incoming freshmen by major, differences do emerge among seniors, with journalism and public relations seniors scoring the highest on the exam, on average. Advertising students score around the mean of the overall sample. DMP majors are scoring under the overall sample average % correct.

In what specific values and competencies are graduating seniors struggling? I list the lowest GSEE scores by competency and major below. Note that sample sizes (n) for the table below are identical to those listed above for graduating seniors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major (Graduating Seniors)</th>
<th>Lowest Average % Correct by Area</th>
<th>Second Lowest</th>
<th>Third Lowest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

8
Perhaps what is most striking about this table is that average exam scores in the Digital Tools and Technology area tend to be relatively low among graduating seniors in all majors except DMP. This could reflect DMP instructor emphasis on digital skills curriculum as reflected in curriculum maps in last year’s report.

One other trend in these data indicate domestic and global diversity knowledge is a low across majors, though this appears to be less of an issue for Advertising and PR majors.

LIMITATIONS
As in years past, these results come with several caveats. For instance, the exam questions used here to assess program-level learning say little about learning at the level of major or area of specialization. It could easily be the case that students who have cultivated expertise in specific areas (e.g., Advertising) simply don’t have a broad knowledge of the JMC discipline that is assessed in the FYEE and GSEE.

Second, the exam questions derived from a list of questions originally provided by ACEJMC have never undergone thorough validity and reliability checks, which means that these questions may not be accurately and reliability measuring what they’re purporting to measure. In the future the JMC assessment coordinator and Director should arrange for reliability and validity testing of the full list of ACEJMC questions. Only then will we know if these items—or perhaps others that could be added—actually capture the value and competency areas we think they capture.

In addition, there could also be sampling or response biases in these data. For example, it could be that only high-achieving freshmen take the FYEE and marginal seniors take the GSEE version of the test. If this were the case (and we don’t know if it is), then average scores may not vary as widely as they could under circumstances in which every incoming freshman and every outgoing senior took the exam. We could eliminate this problem in the future by incentivizing all students to take the exam. Alternatively, we could mandate that every student take the exam in a designated location.

CONCLUSION
It is important to note, even after recognizing the methodological limitations, that there are several commonalities across years of data collection:
First, JMC graduating seniors score far better, on average, than do incoming freshmen on the same exam. Because of sampling limitations, we cannot and should not extrapolate these results to all students. However, it does appear that, comparing across cohorts, students are gaining knowledge.

Second, JMC students continue to gain very little knowledge in the area of statistics / numeracy.

Third, DMP seniors continue to lag behind their Ad, Journalism, and PR counterparts in overall knowledge.

The fact that these three findings emerge consistently from annual data collection signals the possibility that they are indeed real problems to address through curricular and instructional change rather than simply an artifact of measurement, sampling, or response biases.

How Do Professionals Rate Our Student Work? Responses from the Culminating Experience Team Assessment (CETA)
INTRODUCTION
The Culminating Experience Team Assessment (CETA) survey has external professionals evaluate student capstone materials (e.g., Advertising Campaigns casebooks and presentations).

The goal of the CETA is to provide an assessment of student skills. A full list of our reviewers can be found in Appendix III. A sampling of student materials from each sequence is provided below with links to the original content:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advertising</th>
<th>Digital Media Production</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cohen &amp; Co</td>
<td>HOODED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalism</td>
<td>Public Relations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The CETA survey used a purposive sampling method designed to recruit at least two professionals with expertise related to each of our sequences.

Our administrative assistants Darlene Contriucci and Lorie Bednar emailed a survey request to alumni, past reviewers, and any professional networked with our School who has expressed willingness and availability to act as a reviewer. Additionally, snowball sampling used by asking reviewers (and JMC faculty) for names of potential reviewers and then requesting participation from these professionals. In total, seven respondents took the survey: two professionals for DMP, Journalism, and PR and one reviewer for Advertising. Selections of their verbatim responses to the student materials are listed below. I discuss the bolded critiques in detail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sequence</th>
<th>Reviewer #1</th>
<th>Reviewer #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>“Overall, these are quite impressive and more than I'd expect. Any agency would be thrilled to have these students! Visually beautiful. The decks look better than most of what I see out there...If just glancing at these [casebooks and presentations], they seem very complete. But once you dig deeper, they are light in some content... These are very tactic heavy without a lot on the front end to support the tactics. The strategies aren't really strategies. They are more general statements.... Research, if there was any, seemed extremely light. I get it. It's a tough target for these students to reach for research, but there is always a way.”</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DMP

“HOODED High praise from for this film. It made a clear point, without graphic violence and in doing so underscored transparent fears in our society that stem from racial issues and police brutality. It was beautifully shot and well acted...

A SWEARING SESTINA. Nicely shot and well chosen angles, color tones etc. The film is visually very professional. But I was not clear as to what the message was. I think I know but the execution for me fell a bit short. Since the film relied so heavily on voiceover narration, you needed an actor who could carry this better or perhaps change the VO from child to adult to carry the audience along the timeline.”

HOODED: Good concept, decent execution in both direction, costumes, editing, and photography. Yes it needs some work but that will come with time and experience...Too many lens flares / reflections visible.

Forgive Me: Good use of special and visual effects. The fade in of the baby was a nice touch...Some of the shots seemed too jittersy. I wasn't sure if it was intentional or an issue with something technical.

Swearing Sestina: Good concept and decent execution. Could have benefited from better planning...Overall the photography is a little flat.

Journalism

“Is there any coursework focused on news writing? All four of these pieces were well-researched, but the writing styles were poor. Basics like varying sentence structure affect the entire piece. Trying to cram so much information into a piece also harms the overall piece. I understand because I was once a student who did just that. But understanding the structure of a piece is important.”

“Courts: By far the best of these four stories. A human-focused opening keeps the reader's attention. Solid writing throughout with graphic and pictures to help the reader.

Overall: Writers need to focus on being more engaging. Professors have to read their stories. Public does not and often needs to be drawn into their work, especially for long pieces.”

PR

“The Crystal Communications casebook is far too wordy, not well written and disorganized. It featured a variety of relevant research sources and links to the sites that the client can follow up with. Overall, I found it hard to cut through the clutter and "clearly" identify well-defined communications strategies and solutions...In our profession, there is a vital need for clear, concise writing and editing! Measurement and evaluation continue to be challenges for the teams -- and our profession! Challenge teams to develop realistic methods of evaluation and measurements for their strategies and tactics.”

“The casebooks are well thought out and organized, and they're easy to follow. Design of the books is creative while still maintaining a professional feel. Students had quite a large focus on social media strategies when it seems like traditional strategies would have been more effective and budget friendly...There are minor grammatical and spelling issues throughout...The primary and secondary research in these documents is solid. Performing first-hand interviews and hosting focus groups is a great way to gather real-world data. I did struggle to connect the dots between some research aspects and other parts of the campaign though.

At least two themes emerged from verbatim reviewer responses across sequences:

1. Student capstone materials lack attention to detail and much work needs additional editing;

2. Student capstone materials could benefit from improved research and measurement.

The first point has been echoed across reviewer responses every year since at least 2016. As in years past, reviewers across sequences noted a lack of attention to detail, particularly in the written components of work. This manifests in the PR casebooks and presentations as “minor grammatical and spelling errors throughout,” according to the second reviewer. The first PR reviewer noted a “vital need for clear, concise writing and editing!” Further, reviewers evaluating the Journalism sequence’s capstone coursework said “writing styles were poor” and call on writers “to focus on being more engaging.” The Advertising reviewer noted that the capstone materials were “light in some content” and lacking necessary detail.
Second, several reviewers noted problems with depth and application of research to the coursework. For instance, the Advertising reviewer noted that “Research, if there was any, seemed extremely light.” In PR, reviewers said “Measurement and evaluation continue to be challenges” and “I did struggle to connect the dots between some research aspects and other parts of the campaign…” One journalism reviewer did say student capstone work was “well-researched,” but still indicated problems understanding material.

Unlike last year, most reviewers noted that visuals were, at the very least, adequate and often exceeded their expectations. This marks an improvement from the 2017-2018 report. For example, DMP reviewers, while noting “technical” problems with student capstone films, suggested that films were generally “nicely shot” and made “Good use of special and visual effects.”

Finally, I used the LIWC program to quantitatively analyze the content verbatim feedback. The results of this analysis are below. These results tell us (1) word count or total number of words used by reviewers, (2) the overall tone of the content, (3) the use of positive emotional language, (4) the use of negative emotional language, (5) the use of words associated with reward or goals, (6) the use of words associated with reward risk or danger, and (7) the level of certainty with which reviewers make claims.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Word Count (total number of words in review)</th>
<th>Tone (0 to 100, higher = more positive words)</th>
<th>Positive Emotion (0 to 10, higher = more positive affect)</th>
<th>Negative Emotion (0 to 10, higher = more negative affect)</th>
<th>Reward Focus (refers to rewards or goals)</th>
<th>Risk Focus (refers to danger, things to avoid)</th>
<th>Certainty (0 to 10, higher = more certain language)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>98.66</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMP</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>83.66</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalism</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>71.26</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>1,039</td>
<td>88.73</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Higher values across each variable indicate more frequent use of words that are reflective of the variable category. For example, higher values on the certainty variable indicate the reviewers used more certain and declarative words (“always,” “never”; see this resource for more information). Positive words with affective components like “love” or “nice” raise the positive emotion scores. Negative words like “hurt” and “ugly” increase the negative emotion scores.

What is striking here is the overall tone across reviewers by sequence. The Advertising reviewer was mainly positive in tone (98.66 out of 100) and used mostly positive emotional words (6.41 out of 10) when
emotional words were cited. The reviewer used words that indicate certainty (3.21 out of 10) and a reward focus (3.21 out of 10).

Journalism reviewers had the most negative tone compared to reviewers in other sequences (71.26 out of 100). They scored relatively high on the use of negative emotional words (1.01 out of 10) and had the fewest positive emotional words of all the sequences (3.43 out of 10).

DMP and PR reviewers fell in the middle of these two extremes.

LIMITATIONS
The same possible limitations that affect the FYEE and GSEE apply to the CETA responses. Again, there is the caveat of potential sampling bias. In this case, the seven individual reviewers we selected may uniquely perceive certain weaknesses that no other professional would identify if given the opportunity. We cannot generalize results to any larger population of individuals outside of those surveyed.

In addition, one type of response bias that may plague results involves social desirability. That is, for example, reviewers may have held back their strongest critiques for fear of harming the feelings of JMC faculty or students. All reviewers were asked to provide both positive and critical feedback on student capstone coursework. However, from a research perspective, we are unable to determine how much social desirability biased responses, if at all.

CONCLUSION
In sum, the reviewers offered many positive comments. However, the reviewers also made a number of critiques and suggestions for improving student work. Importantly, at least one of these critiques is highly consistent with those discussed in previous assessment data collection cycles. There were also some notable departures from previous years:

First, reviewers continue to highlight JMC capstone coursework lacks attention to detail, which is often reflected in superficial analysis, typos and other writing errors, and a lack of focus or purpose. This may reflect deficiencies in the “Writing” and “Critical Evaluation” ACEJMC competency areas.

Second, several reviewers noted problems with the depth and application of research to the coursework. This critique has been mentioned in the past, but there was more focus on it this year.

Third, this year’s reviewers said visual elements met or exceeded expectations. This is a major departure from the 2017-2018 results and may indicate we’ve “closed the gap” to an extent on visuals.

There are of course many methodological limitations to the CETA as noted above. However, when deficiencies appear in multiple CETA analyses, there is reason to believe results reflect an underlying problem that could be addressed through changes in curriculum and instruction. At the very least, the CETA gives us some brief insights into how well we are training students in applied skills areas.
What Do Our Alumni Say About Their JMC Experience and Career Preparation? (JMC Alumni Survey)
INTRODUCTION

Each fall we send all JMC alumni a request to complete a quick Qualtrics survey. This survey asks about alumni views of JMC, current employment status, annual income, and skill areas in which alumni perceive they need additional training. In addition, the survey asks alumni whether they’d like to support JMC initiatives, such as in-person mentoring or career coaching.

In Fall 2019, 343 JMC alumni completed the survey. Of these respondents, 44% reported being male, 56% reported being female. Respondents’ average age was 49.37 years (sd = 16.50). Eighty-eight percent of the sample was white, 5% reported being black or African American, 2% reported being Hispanic, 1% reported being Asian, and 4% reported belonging to an “Other” race/ethnicity category that was not specified at the outset.

RESULTS

A preliminary question asked of respondents involved making an overall summary evaluation of their educational experience in JMC. Respondents were asked to rank their JMC experience on a Likert-type scale from “Very Poor” to “Excellent.” A summary of responses to this question is displayed below.
The majority of responses fell on the positive end of the distribution. In fact, a combined 90.67% of JMC alumni reported they had a “Good” or “Excellent” educational experience overall. Only 4.66% of respondents said they had an “Average” educational experience. About 4.66% of respondents said they had a “Poor” or “Very Poor” experience.

There are several factors that may influence how alumni perceive their educational experience. One major factor might be variation in area of concentration--Journalism, Advertising, Public Relations, and DMP--within the School.

The table below shows perceptions of educational experience by JMC area of concentration. Cell values reflect raw frequencies of respondents. Percentages are reported below those frequencies.

If we focus on the “Excellent” column and read left to right, we can see that the highest relative proportion (percent) of JMC alumni saying they had an “Excellent” educational experience was PR majors (76.12%), followed by Journalism (64.46%), Other majors (51.52%), Advertising (50.00%), Graduate or M.A. students (45.45%), and DMP (25.00%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AD</th>
<th>DMP</th>
<th>JOURN</th>
<th>PR</th>
<th>GRAD</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
<th>PHOTO-J</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.83%</td>
<td>1.49%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1.52%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.33%</td>
<td>16.67%</td>
<td>3.31%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3.03%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.56%</td>
<td>4.17%</td>
<td>3.31%</td>
<td>4.48%</td>
<td>11.11%</td>
<td>4.55%</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>4.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36.11%</td>
<td>54.17%</td>
<td>28.10%</td>
<td>17.91%</td>
<td>36.89%</td>
<td>39.39%</td>
<td>45.45%</td>
<td>32.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>64.46%</td>
<td>76.12%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>51.52%</td>
<td>45.45%</td>
<td>58.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notably, a one-way analysis of variance shows these differences in perceived educational experience by major were significant $F(6) = 3.48, p = 0.002$.

A post-hoc test showed average experience ratings differed primarily between DMP majors ($M = 2.88$) and Journalism majors ($M = 3.52$) and DMP and PR majors ($M = 3.67$). In both cases, DMP majors rated their JMC experience significantly lower on the scale than did Journalism and PR majors.

There were no significant differences in average ratings between DMP and Advertising ($M = 3.28$), Graduate students ($M = 3.39$), Other majors ($M = 3.36$), and Photojournalism majors ($M = 3.36$).

The next section of the survey asked respondents about their current job status, including whether or not they are now employed full-time or part-time, and whether or not they’re employed in a JMC profession or JMC-related profession.
The figure shown below illustrates the distribution of responses.

This figure shows that a strong minority of respondents said they are employed either full- or part-time in a JMC profession (43.86%).

Almost a third of respondents reported being employed full- or part-time in professions outside JMC (31.58%).

A smaller number of respondents reported being enrolled in graduate school (1.46%) and being unemployed (15.15%), although it should be noted here that at least a small proportion of the “unemployed” respondents were technically retirees.

Next, alumni were asked to report their annual income. Three hundred and two respondents replied:

- 40 respondents (13.25% of the sample) said made less than $25,000 annually;
- 93 respondents (30.80%) said they made between $25,001 and $55,000 annually;
● 78 respondents (25.83%) said they made between $55,001 and $85,000 annually;
● 91 respondents (30.13%) said they made greater than $85,000 annually.

Below, for purposes of comparison, I plot average annual incomes by alumni college major. Bars represent average incomes in dollars.

Here, former graduate students and advertising majors report having the highest annual income, followed by PR and those who reported majoring in a concentration that was phased out or “Other” (this category included defunct majors such as “radio/television production”).

The next highest average annual incomes were among those who majored in Journalism and Digital Media Production. Photojournalism majors reported the lowest annual income.

When asked in which **skills they needed additional training**, the majority of respondents reported wanting to receive additional training in (in order of importance):

● Mobile Application Design
● Web Design
● Statistics
● Video Production
● Data Analysis
• Photo Editing and Production

Alumni were least interested receiving additional training in:
• Writing
• Editing
• Public Speaking
• Ethics and Law
• Research

It is notable that these areas of additional training were largely unchanged from the previous year’s report. Only statistics moved up one position in the rankings. Video moved down one spot.

Finally, all alumni were asked whether they’d like to support various JMC initiatives.

The table below shows the perceived likelihood the respondent would invest in a given JMC initiative (left).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Extremely Likely</th>
<th>Somewhat Likely</th>
<th>Neither Likely or Unlikely</th>
<th>Somewhat Unlikely</th>
<th>Extremely Unlikely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Person Mentoring or Career Coaching</td>
<td>15.22%</td>
<td>27.02%</td>
<td>18.32%</td>
<td>14.91%</td>
<td>24.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Mentoring</td>
<td>15.22%</td>
<td>29.81%</td>
<td>17.39%</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>23.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coming to Campus for a Guest Speaker or Panel</td>
<td>24.53%</td>
<td>22.98%</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>12.11%</td>
<td>26.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing My Story with Jargon Magazine</td>
<td>25.78%</td>
<td>28.26%</td>
<td>19.57%</td>
<td>10.56%</td>
<td>15.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making a One-Time Gift of $25-$100 to Support Student Media, Passports or Similar Initiatives</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>21.74%</td>
<td>18.01%</td>
<td>17.08%</td>
<td>28.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making a Recurring Annual, Quarterly, or Monthly Gift Totalling $100 to $500 per Year to Support Student Media, Passports or Similar Initiatives</td>
<td>2.80%</td>
<td>8.70%</td>
<td>15.84%</td>
<td>21.43%</td>
<td>51.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monetary Gift of $500 or more to Support the Above Mentioned Initiatives, and/or JMC Scholarships</td>
<td>1.86%</td>
<td>2.80%</td>
<td>12.42%</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>68.63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here, larger percentages of alumni said they’d be “extremely likely” or “somewhat likely” to mentor current students virtually (45.03%), mentor students in person (42.24%), come to campus for a guest speaker or panel event (47.52%), or share their story with Jargon Magazine (54.04%).

Alumni were somewhat receptive to making a small, one-time gift. Approximately 36.02% reported being “extremely” or “somewhat likely” to do so.

Fewer respondents (11.49%) said they’re likely to make recurring gifts to JMC totaling $100 to $500 per year. An even smaller number of respondents (4.66%) said they’re either extremely or somewhat likely to make a gift of $500 or more to support School initiatives.

LIMITATIONS

The JMC Alumni survey is a convenience sample survey and results should therefore not be assumed representative of the entire body of JMC alumni. These results provide a preliminary window into the alumni perceptions and career outcomes, but they may easily misrepresent our alumni population as a whole. For example, individuals who take the survey may systematically be more satisfied with JMC than individuals who refuse to take the survey.

Likewise, individuals who take the study may, for example, have higher incomes or better employment outcomes that those who do not. It is also possible that those who take the survey distort the picture in the opposite direction: biasing estimates of income, for example, downward from the true population average. It is impossible to know if these results accurately represent JMC alumni without the use of random sampling techniques.

We used four, $25 Amazon gift cards as an incentive for alumni to take the survey. Possibly, this incentive was not strong enough to entice broader participation. Again, this could necessarily limit data and results.

CONCLUSION

The Alumni Survey has several important limitations and results should be interpreted cautiously. However, this year’s survey revealed several important findings. I summarize the major findings below:

- First, most JMC alumni have positive evaluations of their educational experience. Overall, 58.60% of alumni rated their education as “Excellent;” 32.07% said it was “Good.”

- Evaluations of educational experiences in JMC varied meaningfully by major area of concentration. Specifically, those alumni who majored in EMP or DMP had lower overall ratings of JMC than alumni who majored in PR and Journalism. There were no meaningful differences in average evaluations between the remaining majors (Ad, Photojournalism, etc.)

- Only 37.43% said they currently hold full-time employment in a JMC-related profession (Journalism, DMP, etc.); 6.43% hold part-time employment in a JMC-related profession; 31.58% hold a full-time position in a profession outside JMC; 7.60% reported holding a part-time position.
in a profession outside of the JMC-related professions; the remainder of respondents said they were enrolled in graduate school, are unemployed/retired.

- In terms of income, 13.25% of alumni said they made $25,000 or less annually; 30.80% reported making between $25,001 and 55,000; 25.83% reported $55,001 and 85,000; and a sizeable 30.13% of alumni reported making $85,000 or more annually.

- Alumni continue to want additional training in six areas: mobile application design, web design, statistics, video editing and production, data analysis, and photo editing and production. Alumni were less interested in writing, editing, public speaking, ethics and law, and research.

- In terms of outreach and engagement, a plurality of alumni reported they were “extremely” or “somewhat” likely to share their story with Jargon (56.04%) or serve as a guest speaker at a JMC event (47.52%). A small minority reported the same for donating a large monetary gift (4.66%).

Appendix I: ACEJMC 12 Core Values and Competencies

As a program accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC), we are committed to developing a curriculum designed to meet twelve professional values and competencies:

**Thoughtful, Proficient Communicators**

1. Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
3. Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
4. Apply basic tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

**Who Are Creative, Critical Thinkers**

5. Think critically, creatively and independently.

**Trained To Uncover and Evaluate Information**

6. Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
7. Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
8. Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.

**Within A Legal and Ethical Framework**

9. Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press in the United States, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and assemble and to petition for redress of grievances.
10. Demonstrate an understanding of professional **ethical** principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.

**In A Diverse and Global Society**
11. Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of **diversity in domestic society** in relation to mass communications.
12. Demonstrate an understanding of the **diversity** of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a **global society**.

**Appendix II: FYEE and GSEE Items**

The following survey items, including the response options, were presented verbatim to incoming freshmen and graduating seniors. When presented to freshmen, we called the exam the First-Year Experience Exam (FYEE). When presented to seniors, we called the same items the Graduating Senior Exit Exam (GSEE). These items were derived from the ACEJMC.

1. (Writing) Select the grammatical word that best completes this sentence: “The students were thrilled to learn they had aced ________ presentations.”
   a. their
   b. there
   c. they’re
   d. its
   e. it’s

2. (Writing) The standard style guide for journalists and most other media professionals is:
   a. The Times Stylebook
   b. **The AP Stylebook**
   c. The Chicago Stylebook
   d. The JMC Stylebook
   e. The Turabian Stylebook

3. (Writing) Select the version of this sentence with correct grammar and punctuation:
   a. The project engineer said there is “an extremely strong chance” that the road will be closed longer than three weeks.
   b. The project engineer said, there is, “an extremely strong chance” that the road will be closed longer than three weeks.
c. The project engineer, said there is, “an extremely strong chance” that the road will be closed longer than three weeks.
d. The project engineer said there is, “an extremely strong chance,” that the road will be closed longer than three weeks.
e. The project engineer said: there is “an extremely strong chance” that the road will be closed longer than three weeks.

4. (History) The technological milestone credited with launching “mass” communication is the:
   a. invention of the alphabet
   b. invention of the printing press
   c. invention of the telephone
   d. discovery of electromagnetic waves
   e. development of the internet

5. (History) These individuals are in the same order as which set of industries below:
   Edward R. Murrow / Edward Bernays / D.W. Griffith
   a. Motion pictures / public relations / television
   b. Television / public relations / motion pictures
   c. Television / motion pictures / public relations
   d. Public relations / motion pictures / advertising
   e. Advertising / public relations / television

6. (History) A newspaper war between Pulitzer and Hearst built fervor for a real war between the U.S. and Spain a century ago. The term _______ arose to describe this era of sensationalism.
   a. bloody journalism
   b. yellow journalism
   c. the payola period
   d. scare tactics
   e. pseudo news

7. (Theory) Which of the following theories is best described by this statement: the media don’t tell us what to think, but they tell us what to think about?
   a. Diffusion of innovations
   b. Uses and gratifications
   c. Agenda setting
   d. Cognitive dissonance
   e. Spiral of silence

8. (Theory) The “rule of thirds” suggests that the focus of visual composition should be:
   a. centered in the frame
   b. in the upper third of the frame
   c. in the lower third of the frame
   d. in the left third of the frame
   e. a third up or down, and a third left or right
9. (Theory) In terms of readability, which typeface style is considered best for use in body copy or electronic displays such as television monitors or computer screens?
   a. Ornamental
   b. Sans serif
   c. Decorative
   d. Old style
   e. Script

10. (Theory) “Media convergence” influences the way people perceive and interact with the world. The term refers to:
   a. the crossing over into the digital age
   b. a method of measuring demographics
   c. the converged ground between theories and phenomena
   d. the coming together of media across multiple platforms
   e. the merger of information portals

11. (Tech) These software programs are in the same order as which set of applications?
    Pro Tools / Adobe Premier / Dreamweaver
    a. Web design / video / audio
    b. Audio / Web design / video
    c. Video / Web design / audio
    d. Video / audio / Web design
    e. Audio / video / Web design

12. (Tech) Google Analytics revolutionized web metrics by:
    a. Revamping the types of metrics that are used
    b. Offering data for free
    c. Breaking websites into categories
    d. Informing search results more effectively
    e. Partnering with Twitter for more detailed results

13. (Tech) You are creating a media product about an artist that will include text, artwork, audio recordings, video and an interactive graphic. Your ideal choice for a medium would be:
    a. broadcast show
    b. documentary film
    c. narrative film
    d. multimedia production
    e. public relations packet

14. (Critical Thinking) Private media companies (including movies, television, newspapers, radio, music, and websites) in the U.S. make money through all but which of the following:
    a. commercials
    b. subscriptions
    c. government fees
    d. online payments
15. (Critical Thinking) With the rise of social media, professionals in public relations and advertising have new ways of reaching audiences. Still, the key difference between the two remains:
   a. advertising is a paid message, PR seeks free media exposure
   b. advertising builds an image, PR sells a product
   c. advertising is marketing, PR is commercial speech
   d. advertising determines reputation, PR determines sales
   e. advertising is more effective online, PR is more effective in print

16. (Research) Researchers can gather data using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Which of the following techniques represents a qualitative approach?
   a. Survey
   b. Experiment
   c. In-depth interview
   d. Trend study conducted with a longitudinal sample design
   e. Content analysis

17. (Research) An appropriate use of a focus group is to:
   a. focus attention on analyzing data sets
   b. explore the range of views that emerge about a topic through discussion
   c. convince participants to adopt a specific position or argument
   d. quantitatively experiment with the effectiveness of different messages
   e. test the frequency of specific characteristics in a population

18. (Research) Information gathering typically involves both primary and secondary sources. In doing research to prepare a political profile, identify the primary source in the list below:
   a. A court decision involving the politician
   b. A public record involving the politician
   c. A series of interviews with the politician, conducted by the reporter/researcher
   d. Previous popular press articles written about the politician
   e. A best-selling book about the life of the politician

19. (Critical Eval) In a democracy, the news media serve as the eyes and ears of the public in monitoring those who hold power. This role is widely referred to as the __________ function.
   a. marketplace of ideas
   b. libertarian
   c. objectivity
   d. balance of interests
   e. watchdog

20. (Law) Today, because we want to know what our government is doing, the American public has broad access to the records of federal agencies through the:
   a. Open Access Act
b. Freedom of Information Act
c. Public Right-to-Know Act
d. Citizen Gateway Act
e. Government Oversight Act

21. (Law) The Federal Trade Commission considers deception in advertising to occur when an ad is likely to mislead ____________ consumer with a material statement or omission.
   a. a reasonable
   b. an unreasonable
   c. a well-informed
   d. a gullible
   e. a naïve

22. (Stats/Numeracy) The cover price of a magazine has increased by 10% in the last year. The original price was $1.50. What is the current price?
   a. $1.55
   b. $1.60
   c. $1.65
   d. $1.70
   e. $1.80

23. (Stats/Numeracy) When interpreting and reporting research findings, it is important to remember that correlation is not causation. What does this phrase mean?
   a. Just because two variables are related, it does not mean one produces the other
   b. The simplest answer is usually the correct one
   c. Findings cannot be generalized because too much error exists in the study
   d. Findings cannot be generalized because the sample was not a probability sample
   e. The results did not indicate any consistent information

24. (Critical Eval) A number of metrics are used to measure Web audiences. Which of the following terms indicates how many site visitors respond to an online movie advertisement?
   a. Reach
   b. Click-throughs
   c. Page views
   d. Audience shares
   e. Aggregate traffic

25. (Law) The five freedoms cited in the First Amendment include all but which of the following?
   a. Freedom of speech and press
   b. Freedom of religion
   c. Right to peacefully assemble
   d. Right to bear arms
   e. Right to petition the government with grievances

26. (Law) Under the First Amendment, a person’s right of free expression includes:
a. producing false advertising  
b. distributing obscenity  
c. **the right to engage in hate speech**  
d. falsely shouting “Fire!” in a crowded theater  
e. producing false advertising, the right to engage in hate speech, and falsely shouting "Fire!" in a crowded theater

27. **(Law)** If something false were said about you in a YouTube video, you’d have to prove a number of elements to win a libel suit. If you are a private individual, what element would you not have to prove?  
   a. identification  
   b. publication  
   c. harm or injury  
   d. negligence  
   e. **actual malice**

28. **(Ethics)** Communicators are expected to maintain high standards of professional behavior. High standards are promoted through:  
   a. government licensing of professions  
   b. **industry code of ethics**  
   c. a fee structure for ethical violations  
   d. judicial injunctions  
   e. publication of an ethical infractions list

29. **(Ethics)** The media/journalists should be concerned about ethical behavior and ethical decision making because ethical breaches:  
   a. make the audience and sources unhappy  
   b. are inconsistent  
   c. show how unprofessional media practitioners are compared to other professionals  
   d. increase the possibility of lawsuits  
   e. **play out in public, causing audience distrust and potentially eroding perceptions of media credibility**

30. **(Ethics)** One of the most important things to consider in terms of ethical behavior is defending your action so as to:  
   a. separate issues into categories of importance that you can then rank  
   b. make ethical choices according to a specific situation  
   c. explain your decision using principles that generally hold true in most or all situations  
   d. **seek to always minimize harm**  
   e. employ personal guilt to guide decision-making

31. **(Domestic Diversity)** Minority ownership is a factor in the licensing process for which media industry:  
   a. broadcasting  
   b. advertising  
   c. cinema
d. journalism
e. public relations

32. (Domestic Diversity) When you ask people for their sex, race, or age, you are asking for:
   a. biographics
   b. psychographics
   c. pseudographics
d. **demographics**
e. geographics

33. (Domestic Diversity) Which of the following is considered an ethnicity but not a race:
   a. Black or African-American
   b. White or Caucasian
   c. Asian or Asian-American
d. **Hispanic**
e. Native American

34. (Global Diversity) American television shows are popular in other nations. Critics say the exporting of U.S. media harms the self-identity of other nations, referring to this by the common term of:
   a. cultural diversity
   b. situational domination
   c. societal imbalance
d. **cultural imperialism**
e. media envy

35. (Global Diversity) This particular genre of television programs is the most watched by Latin American as well as U.S. Spanish-speaking audiences:
   a. sitcoms
   b. **telenovelas**
c. dramas
d. los programas de televisión sobre el muerte
e. game shows

**Appendix III: List of CETA Reviewers**

The Culminating Experience Team Assessment (CETA) Survey has at least two professional reviewers evaluate senior capstone project materials.
Because the CETA involves an extensive time commitment on the part of the reviewers, this appendix is dedicated to identifying and thanking those reviewers for their service.

The reviewers are listed in no particular order by sequence.

**Advertising**
Reviewer - Sue Stabe
Reviewer - N/A

**Digital Media Production**
Reviewer - Monica Plunkett
Reviewer - Alex Capaldi

**Journalism**
Reviewer - Matthew Merchant
Reviewer - Michael Shearer

**Public Relations**
Reviewer - Delores Jones
Reviewer - Holly Meuller