

# **School of Journalism and Strategic Media (SJSM) JOUR BA and JOUR MA Assessment Report**

## **JOUR BA Assessment Report**

The School of Journalism and Strategic Media's (SJSM) undergraduate assessment process is guided and approved by its national accreditation organization, the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC). SJSM uses a cohort analysis assessment plan, with incoming freshman in the first year of the cohort followed through their four years in the JOUR BA program, with their performance assessed at various stages. (Please see the summary of our 2016-2020 JOUR BA Cohort Assessment Plan in Appendix A). The current cohort includes students who entered the JOUR BA in Fall 2016, who are followed through Spring 2020. Each cohort is assessed based on the values and competencies identified by the ACEJMC (found in Appendix A). Any changes in the assessment plan are developed at the end of the assessment process (in Year Five or 2020-2021, as shown in Appendix A).

The SJSM faculty is currently working on midpoint assessments for year three, which will be discussed in the Fall 2019 and/or Spring 2020 faculty meetings. Additional recommendations to address the midpoint assessment results will be considered and finalized then. The current midpoint reports, outcomes and responses are presented below.

### Response to Accreditation Site Visit

Based on the recommendation of the ACEJMC external reviewers to incorporate digital education throughout the curriculum, the following curriculum changes are underway (with others discussed in the sequence reports below). To incorporate more digital education into the curriculum and improve writing performance, major changes to the introductory writing class, JOUR 1033 Fundamentals of Journalism, will begin in Fall 2020. (These changes are currently going through the UA approval process. Other recommendations are addressed in the sequence reports to follow.)

In response to site team recommendations, the faculty voted to change the title and focus of the introductory writing course to JOUR 1033 Media Writing so students learn to write in the styles needed for all areas of journalism: print and digital news, broadcast news, advertising, public relations and social media. Basic writing and grammar are being shifted to the GSP or Grammar/Spelling/Punctuation requirement. Starting in Fall 2020, all majors and minors will be required to complete the GSP requirement before taking JOUR 1033 Media Writing, or complete the GSP requirement concurrently. Students complete the GSP in one of two ways: 1) taking and passing JOUR 1003 Journalistic Writing Skills with a grade of C or better; or 2) studying the online GSP module available to all majors and minors on Blackboard, then scheduling, taking and passing the GSP test with a score of 75% or better (to be administered in one of the Journalism computer labs We wanted to have a "free" option for completing the GSP to keep costs down for students, so we included option 2.)

JOUR BA Advertising/Public Relations (Ad/PR) Sequence Midpoint Assessment

The Ad/PR faculty and external professionals assessed student performance in the Media Planning Assignment in JOUR 3723 Advertising Principles and/or the Final Project in JOUR 3743 Public Relations Principles. One client (the Washington County Veterans Office) assessed Public Relations Final Projects. Another external professional reviewed writing in JOUR 4143 PR Writing. The competencies assessed, the average faculty assessment scores for both classes and the average client or external professional assessment scores are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Ad/PR Sequence Midpoint Assessment**  
(Competencies are rated from 1 = Poor to 5 = Excellent)

<u>Competencies</u>	<u>Faculty Mean Score</u>	<u>Professional/Client Mean Score</u>
<u>Ad/PR Writing Competency</u>		
Rationale/Writing Style	3.82	4.85
Grammar/Spelling/Punctuation	3.73	4.85
<u>Numerical Competency</u>		
Accuracy in Calculating Data (if applicable)	3.93	3.71
Achieves Goals/Good Numerical Logic/Used Data Correctly	3.93	4.57
<u>Application of Research Competency</u>		
Research Sources Used/Interpreted Correctly	3.73	4.43
Research Applied to Develop Effective Strategy	3.71	4.85
<u>Tools &amp; Technologies Competency</u>		
Used Excel Correctly/Presented Data Well (if applicable)	3.51	4.71
Used Online Information Well	3.73	4.43
<u>Critical Thinking Competency</u>		
Provided Logical Strategic Recommendations	3.88	5
Exhibited Creative Thinking	3.91	4.71

As is typical from previous assessments, the faculty scores tend to be lower than the client scores. There were four external professionals assessing writing for cohort students in JOUR 4143 PR Writing. The average writing score was 4.125 out of 5, including style, grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Based on the previous cohort assessment, accreditation site visit recommendations, and this midpoint assessment (where accuracy in calculating data was a low score), we feel adding the requirement that Ad/PR students take MKTG 3633 Marketing Research is warranted. (This change is currently matriculating through the UA's approval process.) The course teaches about analysis of primary and secondary data for strategy implementation, market forecasting,

segmentation analysis, monitoring consumer attitudes and motivations, as well as research designs and techniques. The numerical skills taught in MKTG 3633 are directly related to the media usage calculations, consumer segment development, and strategy development taught in advanced Ad/PR classes. In addition, professionals who visit our classes and/or whom we consult for curricular advice all support this recommendation.

To improve students' digital skills and performance on the use of tools and technologies, we propose all Ad/PR students be required to take one digital skills course from this list, either: JOUR 2053 Multimedia Journalism, JOUR 2063 Media Technology, JOUR 405V Videography/Editing, or JOUR 405V Digital Content Strategy. This allows our students to select a digital course based on their interests, as they typically work in different types of companies and jobs. Eventually, if another Ad/PR faculty member can be hired, we'd ask that person to develop a digital course appropriate to most of our students' needs.

Ad/PR faculty have also incorporated additional digital training in classes. For example, in JOUR 4453 Media Planning, new or revised lectures and assignments on search engine optimization, paid search, digital advertising, analytics, and influencer marketing were added. In addition, to provide professional training, guest speakers from Saatchi & Saatchi X (digital advertising and media planning/buying), Collective Bias (influencer marketing) and ACORN: The Influence Agency (selecting influencers and implementing influencer campaigns) presented to the class and answered students' questions. These professionals also confirmed that the digital material added to JOUR 4453 was accurate and current.

The Ad/PR faculty supported the recommendation to revise JOUR 1033 Media Writing and require the GSP to address writing. Other responses are found in the section on the survey responses of 2018 JOUR BA graduates that follows the sequence and internship reports. Each faculty member is considering additional ways to address the lower-rated competencies for sequence meetings where the midpoint assessment is finalized in Fall 2019.

### JOUR BA Broadcast Sequence Midpoint Assessment

The Broadcast faculty reviewed the performance of 2016-2020 cohort students who have taken JOUR 3072/3071L Broadcast News II. Faculty have already begun making changes based on the site visit, survey of 2018 JOUR BA graduates, and the midpoint assessment. Starting in Spring, 2019, the first broadcast course students take—Broadcast News Reporting I—included an additional requirement at the end of the semester, production of a TV story. [Students in this class learn audio and video editing and the basics of shooting video. They produce radio stories that air on the student radio station KXUA.]

Initial results suggest that students will be better prepared for Broadcast News Reporting II with this additional assignment; the final assessment won't be completed until after Spring 2020. In Fall 2019, a podcasting component will be added to the Advanced Radio News Reporting class. Students will learn about podcasts and learn how to produce them. Successful, quality podcasts are produced professionally so we aim to teach students to use their journalism skills in producing a podcast. These changes also respond to the site visit team's recommendation to include more digital skills and concepts in our curriculum.

The Broadcast faculty also considered the external reviews of judges in the BEA Festival of Media Arts and professionals for JOUR 4873 and JOUR 4893. Generally, the external reviewers rated the stories well, including for writing and videography. Positive feedback included being familiar with terms used in the industry, and satisfaction with the stories and accompanying websites. Suggestions for improvement included working on video and audio editing so the audio overlay cut in and out at proper times, striving for more clarity and better pacing, setting up cameras so the visuals aren't too close or showing extraneous background items, and spell-checking graphics. The Broadcast faculty will continue to consider these suggestions as they finalize their midpoint assessment in fall 2019.

### JOUR BA News/Editorial Midpoint Assessment

News/Editorial faculty have learned from the midpoint assessment, alumni surveys, conference presentations and discussions of journals and other readings that technological and analytical skills are key to producing graduates who will compete successfully in career fields. Specifically, to respond to improving students' numerical competency, we added Data Reporting courses to our curriculum where students are taught to develop stories by mining data.

Editors at organizations that hire news interns have stressed that students still need writing and reporting skills. Stories reported at the beginning of the semester in News Reporting I are photocopied and saved until the end of the semester to return to students for rewriting. The improvement is notable. Writing performance will be assessed again in the capstone assessment.

An external professional reviewed student performance in the JOUR 4503 Magazine Writing course. Positive feedback included that students appeared to have a good grasp of the fundamentals of magazine writing, had good story structure, used a good range of sources and included a great deal of information well, while putting a "human face" to the story. Areas for improvement included considering how to use scene building to open a piece, providing details on the subject to humanize him or her and generate interest, and providing clarity and further explanation in introducing a piece, in story context, and on the role of organizations introduced in the story.

The midpoint assessment and alumni surveys have shown us that our graduates need basic skills in using digital equipment. They also need the basic knowledge of presenting their work in a digital format. In the future, assuming curriculum changes are formally approved, our students will be required to take JOUR 2053 Multimedia Journalism before they take JOUR 2013 News Reporting or take it concurrently, to ensure they learn digital skills.

Those previously mentioned aspects of the Journalism School curriculum compel the News/Ed faculty to consider:

- Reviewing and updating texts used across the curriculum;
  - Restructuring, when applicable, aspects of the basic news curriculum;
  - Staying abreast of the best practices in data journalism;
  - Increasing awareness of how this generation of students learn and collect information.
- Our communication with one another has been quite helpful in this regard.

Internship Midpoint Assessment 2016-2020 – June 2019

Nine members of the cohort received academic credit for internships, while five others requested credit for summer 2019 internships. The nine cohort students who completed internships worked in various jobs, including for a global advertising firm, for a non-profit, for a magazine, and in several campus communications positions. Students generally received high ratings from their employers, based on a 1-5 scale. Cohort score averages are:

**Professional Skills**

- 4.67/5** - The intern's handling of the tools and technologies appropriate for the profession of this internship.
- 4.78/5** - Ability to conduct research and evaluate information using appropriate methods.
- 4.67/5** - Ability to write correctly and clearly in required forms and styles.  
Ability to critically evaluate his/her own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, style and grammatical correctness.
- 4.5/5** (three do not apply) - Ability to apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.
- 4.78/5** - Ability to use photographs, maps, graphs or other visuals as needed.
- 4.78/5** - Understanding of professional ethical principles, and ability to work ethically in pursuing truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- 4.78/5** - Ability to think critically, creatively and independently.

**Work Habits**

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>4.75/5</b> – Promptness          | <b>4.75/5</b> - Maturity                                       |
| <b>4.88/5</b> - Interest in the job | <b>5/5</b> - Willingness to learn                              |
| <b>4.5/5</b> – Organization         | <b>4.75/5</b> - Work well with clients, sources and colleagues |
| <b>4.88/5</b> - Accept criticism    | <b>4.88/5</b> - Work well under deadline pressure              |

The lowest score has consistently been students' ability to use numerical and statistical concepts. In this group, the rating was 4.5/5 (with three employers saying that did not apply to the internship). Journalism faculty members continue to discuss ways to improve numerical competency, there is a strengthened data journalism component in place, MKTG 3633 Marketing Research will be required for Ad/PR Sequence students starting in Fall 2020, as well as traditionally data-driven advertising and public relations classes. Overall the scores were strong.

JOUR BA 2018 Graduates Assessment Survey

Each spring semester, the SJSM conducts an assessment survey of the previous year's JOUR BA graduates, as required by ACEJMC. In spring 2019 we surveyed 139 students who graduated with a Bachelor's degree in January through December 2018. Of 139 students sampled, 29 responded, representing a 20.86% response rate. Here is the breakdown of responses by concentration (based on a total of 31 as some students complete more than one concentration).

<u>Sequence or Concentration</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Advertising / Public Relations	14	45.2%
Broadcast	12	38.7%
News/Editorial	3	9.7%
Combined Major	2	6.4%

Students rated how much the program contributed to the development of various skills and topics using the following scale: 1 = Very Little, 2 = Some, 3 = Quite a Bit, and 4 = Very Much. The mean responses to these items are shown below.

**Table 2: 2018 JOUR BA Assessment Survey Results**  
(Competency ratings: 1 = Very Little; 2 = Some; 3 = Quite a Bit; 4 = Very Much)

<u>Items / Competencies</u>	<u>Mean Rating 2011-2017</u>	<u>Mean Rating 2018</u>
Valuing truth, accuracy and fairness	3.39	3.44
Valuing freedom of expression	3.19	3.11
Valuing ethical ways of thinking	3.41	3.41
Valuing history and roles of media in society	3.21	3.04
Valuing diversity of audiences and sources	2.99	3.52
Writing clearly and accurately	3.48	3.35
Using the tools of technology	2.86	3.04
Applying theories in presenting images and information	2.67	3.00
Engaging in research and critical evaluation	2.92	3.00
Using and interpreting numbers	2.22	2.35
Thinking creatively and analytically	3.05	3.00
Speaking clearly and confidently	3.10	2.92
Average of Means for All Items	3.04	3.09

Internships: Graduates rated their internship experience on a scale of 1 = Very Valuable, 2 = Valuable, 3 = Somewhat Valuable and 4 = Not Valuable. The 24 (of 29 or 82.75%) students who reported having an internship rated their experience as valuable, with an average of 2.04 (compared to a mean of 1.97 for the 2011-2017 sample).

The results suggest that JOUR BA graduates are successful in obtaining jobs in the field and gaining admission to graduate school. Twenty-one of 29 respondents (or 72.41%) reported holding a job (19) or internship (2) in the field, while three are currently in a graduate program. In other words, 24 of 29 or 82.75% of 2018 graduates are working in the field or have successfully matriculated into an advanced degree program.

While the overall average of mean ratings was positive (3.09 out of 4), the means ranged from a low of 2.35 for using and interpreting numbers to a high of 3.52 for valuing diversity of audiences and sources (followed by 3.44 for valuing truth, accuracy and fairness, and 3.41 for valuing ethical ways of thinking). The results suggest that our efforts in educating students about

diversity and ethics were successful with the 2018 cohort. These students graduated with an appreciation for diversity and a professional ethical or moral compass. Therefore, we will continue the same practices and policies we adopted to improve diversity and ethics education, adding new educational workshops and materials as needed and when faculty have new ideas or techniques to try.

The verbatim responses to the open-ended question that asked for any additional comments about the School provided suggestions, including learning more about Adobe products including Photoshop and Illustrator, for example. Some recommendations made for Ad/PR included updating digital in the curriculum and requiring Campaigns for all students in the concentration. Regarding reporting, one student wanted to learn “how to break down more complex topical issues like math, taxes and politics.” Another encouraged print reporting students to diversify their skill sets as he or she did not feel “that the profession offers me a secure future financially.”

For the verbatim and mean responses below 3.0 (2.35 for using and interpreting numbers and 2.92 for speaking clearly and confidently), each concentration is developing ways to improve student learning and performance in these areas. As noted earlier, in the Ad/PR Concentration, starting in Fall 2020, students are required to take MKTG 3633 Marketing Research to improve numerical competency. Students are now required to make presentations in Media Planning, Account Planning and Public Relations Writing, to help improve their public speaking skills. The instructor of Creative Strategy is adding or revising assignments to require the use of Adobe software. In addition, in Fall 2019, faculty in all sequences are considering how to improve performance for all items, including those most relevant to their sequences, and in courses required by all majors.

#### JOUR BA Midpoint Assessment – Other Recommendations

In addition to the responses already noted in this JOUR BA report, the Assessment Committee will review these results and make recommendations to the faculty in fall 2019 and/or spring 2020.

## **JOUR MA Assessment Report**

The JOUR MA Assessment Plan was revised, based on the recommendations of the external reviewers, after their site visit in October 2017 (see the summary in Appendix B). The faculty discussed and approved the revised plan in 2018. We have already responded to the recommendations of the external reviewers, as noted below. We are also in the early stages of gathering materials before the next scheduled graduate program external review. The Graduate Committee will continue to gather graduate assessment materials and develop recommendations over the next few years. Thus far, there has been no need to change the revised assessment plan.

The recommendations of the external reviewers included 1) adding an internship course; 2) increasing graduate course offerings; 3) including more assessments by professionals and faculty external to SJSM; and 4) recruiting more diverse graduate students.

Where possible with existing resources, curricular responses to the external reviewers' recommendations were completed. The faculty approved a graduate internship course, JOUR 508V, a syllabus, and a supervisor assessment form completed by external professionals when graduate students complete internships. This course addressed the reviewers' recommendations to add an internship course as well as include more outside professionals when assessing JOUR MA students' performance.

To address recommendations for additional course offerings in News Narratives, graduate classes were introduced including JOUR 5173 Social Media and Journalism, JOUR 5093 Business Journalism, and JOUR 5283 Data Journalism. In Documentary, a new tenure track faculty member specializing in Native American filmmaking was hired. She plans to introduce one or more Broadcast-Documentary courses after she arrives on campus in Fall 2019. Unfortunately, additional course offerings for graduate Advertising-Public Relations students cannot be provided without hiring additional Ad-PR faculty.

To address the recommendation to recruit more diverse graduate students, the following steps have been taken. Clinical Assistant Professor Niketa Reed, with help from Graduate Coordinator Rob Wells, created the Emerging Voices recruitment program targeting African American students in southern Arkansas. Reed and Wells organized a schedule of events for a campus visit of five college students from University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff, a historically black college, on November 14-16, 2018. The prospective students met with campus leaders such as Dr. Yvette Murphy-Erby, vice provost for diversity and Dr. Valandra, program director of African & African American Studies. Students attended a special Ethics Center program sponsored by CNN editor Steven Holmes about the state of Washington politics. This effort was supported by a \$3,000 grant from the Graduate School Recruitment Assistance Fund and additional funds from African American studies.

The students were impressed by the outreach effort. Two of these Emerging Voices students applied and were accepted to the UA JOUR MA program: Neba Evans from Marietta, Georgia, and Whitney King of Jonesboro, Arkansas. Both were awarded Journalism Department graduate assistant positions, which Wells reserved for such qualified candidates. Prof. Reed discovered on a follow-up visit to Pine Bluff that the students spoke highly of the University of Arkansas' outreach efforts and intended to apply in the future.

Separately, Wells recruited a Fulbright scholar from Haiti, Obed Lamy, entering the program in Fall 2019. Reed and Wells also attended the Attracting Intelligent Minds recruitment program in Fall 2018 and a Graduate School diversity recruitment workshop in Spring 2019. As a result of these outreach efforts, the School of Journalism and Strategic Media will have six incoming students in Fall 2019: 50 percent male, 50 percent female; 33% African American; 17% Hispanic; 50% White; and one Fulbright scholar

from Haiti. Other diverse students recruited since Fall 2017 include: Denzel Jenkins; Itto Outini (Fulbright scholar, Morocco); Mohammed M'Bareck (Fulbright scholar, Mauritania); Boitshepo Balowzi (Fulbright scholar, Botswana), Taylor Strickland; Bryan Pollard and Breybinda Alvarez.

Indirect assessment measures include graduate student performance in competitions. In an international competition, Bryan Pollard was selected as a John S. Knight Journalism Fellow at Stanford University. He is completing the JOUR MA program with an emphasis in documentary filmmaking. Pollard will examine the challenges confronting a free Native American press and seek ways to increase the autonomy of tribal media.

Denzel Jenkins and Shane White won a 2019 Mid-America Emmy for Long Form-Non-Fiction for their film Homeless in Boomtown. Bryan Pollard and Taylor Strickland were recognized with an Honorable Mention – Long Form-Non-Fiction for their film A Shelter First. Andrew Epperson also received an Honorable Mention in Long Form-Non-Fiction for his film Out of the Woods.

The “Rad Grads” graduate team in Dr. Ignatius Fosu’s JOUR 5463 Campaigns course entered the Collegiate ECHO national campaign competition in 2016, advancing to the semifinals. The judges, who are direct marketing and/or social marketing professionals, provided the following assessment (around or after the time of the external review) of their performance. The team has a maturity level that is meaningful in their presentation. The campaign was well researched with primary research confirming assumptions and strategy based upon research. Also good use of surveys among small business users. Excellent grammar (only saw 1 typo) and nice use of references. Good plan; liked the humorous commercial, good ROI and GRP information, good video ad, and the budget and media plan are thorough. Overall the campaign is well integrated.

### **Advertising/Public Relations Emphasis – Interim Assessment**

JOUR 5463 Campaigns: The Collegiate ECHO professional judges, when assessing the semifinalist Rad Grads team, made these suggestions for improvement: use a flighted rather than year-round schedule, sometimes the budget did not tie together, the commercial took a long time to load so next time just provide the YouTube link. Explain acronyms better and provide high and low ROI estimates. The format of the document was hard to read so avoid using columns on landscape orientation and don’t use a dark background.

As a result, Fosu continued to stress good writing, good use of research, cohesive media planning, and other suggestions from the ECHO professional judges in subsequent graduate Campaigns classes. He also focused on editing papers carefully, providing specific feedback to improve analysis and use of research, and incorporated additional information from new online research databases provided by the School. Fosu completed an assessment of graduate students in the Spring 2019 JOUR 5463 Campaigns course. On a scale of 1 = Poor to 5 = Excellent, the ratings were:

The writing has a clear focus and is well-organized, from the beginning through the end.	5
The writing demonstrates the author’s mastery of the material and appropriate sourcing of information.	5
Interviews, research, and other primary or secondary sources used effectively.	4
Writing shows and accurately represents appropriate diversity	4

Fosu will provide any external assessments completed by clients in the future.

JOUR 5063 Issues in Advertising and Public Relations: In Fall 2017, students in JOUR 5063 created a social marketing plan/social media plan for the UASuccess, the undergraduate student mentoring and grants programs for first-generation college students. The external client termed the plans “amazing” and “wonderful,” noting that UASuccess was already using the “STEP Up” messaging provided by the JOUR MA students. Despite several requests, the client did not return the assessment forms, providing instead the short summary above. Dr. Jan Wicks completed an assessment of the graduate team in her class.

The writing has a clear focus and is well-organized, from the beginning through the end.	4
The writing demonstrates the author’s mastery of the material and appropriate sourcing of information.	4
Interviews, research, and other primary or secondary sources used effectively.	3.5
Writing shows and accurately represents appropriate diversity	4

In future sections of the course, Wicks will stress improved writing and provide examples of well written work. She’ll also review primary and secondary sources more carefully and provide additional examples of how to use research to support recommendations. She will also highlight the diverse target audience(s) and explain more fully how to address and reach them.

Wicks will provide any external assessments returned by clients in the future as well.

JOUR MA Assessment – Other Recommendations

In addition to the responses already noted in this report, the Graduate Committee will review these results and make recommendations to the faculty in fall 2019 and/or spring 2020.

## **Appendix A**

### **School of Journalism and Strategic Media (SJSM)**

### **Summary of Assessment Plan for JOUR BA – Undergraduate Program**

The School of Journalism and Strategic Media's (SJSM) undergraduate assessment process is guided by its national accreditation organization, the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC). SJSM uses a cohort analysis assessment plan, with incoming freshman in the first year of the cohort followed through their four years in the JOUR BA program, and performance assessed at various stages. The current cohort includes students who entered the JOUR BA in Fall 2016 through Spring 2020. Each cohort is assessed based on the current values and competencies or learning outcomes identified by the ACEJMC, shown below.

#### **ACEJMC's 12 Professional Values and Competencies / Learning Outcomes**

Individual professions in journalism and mass communication may require certain specialized values and competencies. Irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

- understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, 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 to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications
- demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- think critically, creatively and independently;
- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;

- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

Here is a summary of the Assessment Plan for the 2016-2020 Cohort.

#### ALUMNI SURVEY:

The department will conduct an Alumni Survey every spring semester directed at the graduates from one or two years prior to the current year. This practice began in spring 2018. The Alumni Survey was developed in spring 2016 from a survey created by Elon University. We appreciate their generosity in sharing this survey with us. It is expected that the same survey will be used in the future as long as it is appropriate, in order to enable year-to-year comparisons of data.

#### ASSESSMENT SURVEY:

The department developed an Assessment Survey to be administered to incoming first- year students of the new cohort in the fall semester and again in the spring semester. Since most journalism majors take JOUR 1023, Media and Society, in their first year, we will administer this survey in the first week of this course both semesters. This survey will be administered again to students in the cohort when, as seniors, they take JOUR 4981, Journalism Writing Requirement.

The Assessment Survey administered to the 2011 student cohort was revised in spring 2016. It is a direct measure comprised of 38 questions addressing the competencies in law, ethics, history and role of professionals, diversity, presentation of images and information, and the application of numerical and statistical concepts.

#### ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE FOR SECOND COHORT (2016-2020):

##### **2016-2017 - Year I:**

We will administer the Assessment Survey to incoming first-year students in fall 2016 and spring 2017. We will track these students by name and ID number to establish a basis of comparison for administering the same survey in their senior year. This survey measures several of the ACEJMC's values and competencies.

Recognizing that a survey is unable to measure writing and critical thinking skills, we will evaluate these competencies through direct methods via existing measures in our Core Curriculum. We will evaluate these skills in an early, ungraded assignment administered in JOUR 1023 Media and Society and compare these results with the Journalism Writing Requirement (JOUR 4981) completed in their senior year. In JOUR 1033 Fundamentals of Journalism, we will administer a grammar test and compare the results of this exam in the students' first year with the results of the same exam in their senior year. The grammar post-test

will be administered in JOUR 4981. The Journalism Writing Requirement (JOUR 4981) includes a component for evaluating grammar in the students' senior paper as well.

	Pre-test	Post-test
<b>JOUR 1023 (Media and Society)</b>		
Assessment Survey	X X	
First out-of-class assignment [held in Assessment testing file until Year IV]		
<b>JOUR 1033 (Fundamentals of Journalism)</b>		
Grammar test	X	

### **2017-2018 - Year II:**

Because we didn't want to wait until our students graduate to identify issues in our program, we decided to institute a second-year assessment measure to address any concerns. In their second year, Broadcast and News/Editorial students take an entry-level course for their sequence. Advertising and Public Relations majors take their sequence entry-level course in their third year. As a way to establish a mid-point analysis, sequence entry courses will administer an evaluation instrument every semester, every year, i.e., the first out-of-class assignment to be compared to an assignment given at the end of the semester or by comparing an assignment to the JOUR 1023 or 1033 assessment. These direct measures are not for overall comparative purposes, but serve as a point of comparison from year to year. We will review the results of the entry-level assignment with an exit assignment to measure student competencies within the entry-level courses. This mid-point measure will allow us to address any concerns before the students leave our program.

	First out-of-class assignment
<b>JOUR 2013 News I</b>	X
<b>JOUR 3072/3071L</b>	X

### **2018-2019 - Year III:**

Advertising and Public Relations students will complete the mid-point evaluation in their third year. The third year will also include an evaluation of the internship experience by collecting internship supervisor reports to assess our students' mastery of the professional competencies. The internship evaluation will be administered as an indirect method.

	Out-of-class assignment	Collected by Internship Director
<b>JOUR 3723 Advertising Principles</b>	X	
<b>JOUR 3743 Public Relations Principles</b>	X	
<b>Internship Supervisor Reports (Summer 2019)</b>		X

**2019-2020 - Year IV:**

The fourth year of our assessment plan includes several important components as our cohort prepares to complete our program. We will once again administer the same Assessment Survey that students completed in their first year to establish how well our students have mastered the ACEJMC's professional values and competencies.

Sequence capstone courses will also be utilized to evaluate how well our students have mastered the learning objectives of our curriculum. These courses will also include an evaluation of the application of tools and technologies of the profession, given the requirements of the respective sequences and fields. This will be done through a final project assignment.

The writing, research, and critical thinking skills will be evaluated in the Journalism Writing Requirement. The capstone courses and the writing requirement are direct measures.

As an indirect measure, we will ask our graduating seniors to evaluate the quality of their education as Journalism majors via an exit interview or senior survey. Additionally, an indicator of mastery will include our student accomplishments in external competitions; we recognize that these competitions generally involve our best students whereas assessment measures should address the performance of all students.

These comparisons will help us determine how effective our program is in preparing our students for their future professional and/or educational endeavors.

	Final project assignment	Post-Test and Surveys	Collected by Internship Director
<b>Sequence Capstone Courses*</b> JOUR 3023 News Reporting II JOUR 4453 Media Planning and Strategy and/or JOUR 4473 Account Planning JOUR 4553 Magazine Editing & Production JOUR 4873 Television News Reporting II  <i>*Ungraded copy of each graduating senior's final project in final course of sequence to be kept in Assessment file.</i>	X X X X X		
<b>JOUR 4981, Journalism Writing Requirement:</b> Grammar post-test Assessment Survey Senior Exit Survey		X X X	
<b>Internship Supervisor Reports</b>			X

**2020-2021 - Year V – Year of Analysis:**

This fifth year of the assessment plan will be a year of analysis of the findings. Major questions will include:

- Has the 2016-2017 cohort mastered the learning objectives for core and sequence courses at an appropriate level?
- Did the changes introduced in 2016-2017 for the 2016-2017 cohort overcome the weaknesses identified in the 2011-2012 cohort's mastery of the learning objectives?
- What weaknesses need to be addressed and how should they be addressed?

This year of analysis will include planning for the implementation of any necessary changes in the curriculum to assure that our curriculum has the desired impact. Changes in the assessment plan for evaluating the 2021-2025 cohort will be applied during this year as well.

**Future Indirect Measures (3 years post-graduation):**

Additional indirect measures will be included three years after this cohort graduates. An Alumni Survey and an Employer Survey will be extremely helpful in determining the effectiveness of our program in preparing our students for their professional careers.

## **Appendix B**

### **School of Journalism and Strategic Media (SJSM)**

### **Summary of Assessment Plan for JOUR MA – Graduate Program**

#### **UA JOUR MA Program: Intended Learning (Educational) Outcomes**

The JOUR MA provides advanced journalism studies in these areas: news/editorial, broadcast/documentary and/or advertising/public relations (Ad/PR). JOUR MA students take 18 to 24 hours of journalism courses (with an optional six hours in a second unit or area instead of journalism) and six thesis hours. All JOUR MA students are required to take JOUR 5023 Journalism Theory and JOUR 5043 Journalism Research Methods, and six hours of JOUR 600V Thesis.

The key courses in each area of the graduate program used for assessment include:

#### Advertising / Public Relations

JOUR 4463 Campaigns

JOUR 5063 Issues in Advertising / Public Relations

#### Broadcast / Documentary

JOUR 5323 Documentary Production I

JOUR 5333 Documentary Production II

#### News / Narratives

JOUR 4503 Magazine Writing

JOUR 5313 Literature of Journalism

#### Required Courses

JOUR 5023 Theory

JOUR 5063 Research Methods

Direct Measures: Required course assessments (JOUR 5023 and JOUR 5063), Area course assessments (Ad/PR, Broadcast/Documentary and News/Narratives), and Thesis (Capstone Assessment)

Indirect Measures: Survey of graduates in each review cohort, Awards won by students in the review cohort, and Employment of graduates in the review cohort

#### **Expected Educational Outcomes/Competencies and Corresponding Courses**

This section outlines the intended educational outcomes for students in the JOUR MA program. Performance is assessed in the required courses as well as the key courses in each area (Ad/PR, Broadcast, or News Narratives). The professor who teaches each course assesses the students via their performances in the major journalistic stories, narratives or reports in the course. Then the graduate committee considers all assessments by individual faculty to develop its own report and recommendations.

1. To write competently in the appropriate writing styles for the area(s) of journalism the student selects.
2. To understand the concepts, theories, skills, tools and technologies used in the appropriate area of journalism.

3. To understand how to conduct, use and analyze primary and secondary research using quantitative or qualitative methods or other methods appropriate to the area of Journalism.

Assess in JOUR 5043 Journalism Research Methods

4. To understand the role of the profession in society and the importance of representing diverse viewpoints and experiences in theory and practice.

The instructor of each required or key areas course outlines the aspects of professionalism and diversity covered in the course, then reports how well students incorporated this material into course papers, reports or other outcomes. Instructors will examine finished coursework for evidence of accurate and respectful use and/or depiction of diverse sources and groups.

5. To complete a capstone experience demonstrating proficiency in designing and producing a thesis which incorporates the appropriate Journalistic skills, theories and methods.

Thesis advisors and committees evaluate the quality of writing, production and research. In addition, they assess each thesis for the accurate and respectful use and/or depiction of diverse sources and groups.

#### A. Direct and Indirect Measures

We reviewed the assessment materials shared by the external reviewers as well as the guide to assessment of learning outcomes posted by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. The ACEJMC Guide states that direct measures, such as capstone projects, aggregate internship evaluations and course-embedded assessment, require students to demonstrate what they have learned. Indirect measures, which measure perceptions, attitudes and outcomes of learning, include student or alumni surveys, student awards, and graduation and employment data. Therefore, we will use the following direct and indirect measures of assessment in the future.

#### B. Assessment of Student Performance by External Professionals

##### **Direct Measures**

External professionals, external clients, or external faculty will review student performance in courses and the capstone thesis, as indicated below.

Advertising / Public Relations

JOUR 5063 Issues in Advertising and Public Relations  
Client Assessment of Social Marketing Plans

JOUR 5463 Campaigns  
Client Assessment of Final Campaign

JOUR 5473 Account Planning  
Client Assessment of Account Planning Project

Documentary / Broadcast

JOUR 5323 Documentary Production I  
JOUR 5333 Documentary Production II

When student documentaries are completed, an external professional will be invited to view and assess the documentaries in the final class and/or be sent links and form to view and assess the documentaries.

News / Narratives

JOUR 5503 Magazine Writing  
JOUR 5313 Literature of Journalism

When student articles, data projects and similar works are completed in the News Narratives sequence, external professionals will be invited to assess this work. The feedback will be shared with students. The faculty incorporate that feedback from these people into our future lesson plans.

Capstone Thesis

If students complete a thesis project, an external professional at the client organization, nonprofit, or media outlet, etc., will assess the thesis or the relevant parts of the thesis.

If students complete a research thesis, the outside member of the thesis committee will assess the thesis, if applicable.

Aggregate Internship Evaluations

Based on our last external program review, at the December 2017 JOUR faculty meeting, the faculty approved the addition of JOUR 508V Journalism Graduate Internship to the list of courses graduate students can take. Internship supervisors will assess the performance of JOUR MA students who take the internship course and responses will be aggregated and reported to the faculty as needed to close the loop and in the next external review.

**Indirect Measures**

Entrance survey for the cohort that aligns with the existing exit survey.

Survey of Graduates – we will continue to survey each cohort in the year prior to the next external review.

Exit survey for students who do not complete or leave the JOUR MA program

Student Awards – we will continue to use the performance of each cohort in professional or scholarly awards competitions as an indirect assessment measure.

Graduation and Employment Data – we will continue to use the graduation and employment data for each cohort as an indirect assessment measure.