

*Institutional Effectiveness Report
Academic Year (2007-2008)
Mass Communication*

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Mission and Goals

Mission Statement

The Mass Communication program at Francis Marion University seeks to provide our students with guidance and encouragement to develop communication skills needed to begin careers in journalism, public relations, and allied professions. For students who do not choose to prepare for a career as media professionals, we expect to illuminate them on media traditions, to inculcate in them an appreciation of free expression, to kindle in them a desire to learn, to help them understand the roles the media play in America and to encourage them to share the fruits of their intellectual growth. We will provide for our students a climate of learning that stresses the importance of personal honor and integrity, and promote the responsibility to serve society through the productive use of their communication talent and training.

Rooted in the liberal arts tradition, we emphasize the value of a broad educational foundation that encompasses a competence in the use of English and a familiarity with a second language. We want to encourage students to become informed, responsible, and articulate and be able to think critically and creatively, write well and develop an understanding of media history, ethics and law. We aim to refine the student's reporting, writing and presentation skills, including tasks of editing and content production for traditional and converged media. We want our students to understand and use the changing technologies of communication to better equip them to work in the emerging multi-media work place.

Combining discipline-specific knowledge with expressive, interpretive and reasoning skills, we encourage originality and creativity, promote intellectual curiosity, critical analysis, clarity of thought, precision of language and a desire to continue learning into graduate study. We seek to provide knowledge and the requisite learning skills necessary to fully participate and succeed in a global society as a communication professional and as an involved citizen.

2007-2008 Objectives

- To continue development of a department QEP plan.
- To provide our students at least one major QEP opportunity.
- To provide more experiential learning opportunities for more students.
- To develop/implement a plan to expand communication with the department's alumni.
- To add courses: Broadcast Presentation Skills and Introduction to Sports Broadcasting
- To add Media Ethics course; separating it from Media Law and Ethics.
- To develop a cooperative visual journalism minor.
- To continue to calibrate our curriculum with evolving professional standards.
- To recognize our best students.
- To offer more of our courses in the university's honors program.
- To add to our department's web site resources for current and prospective students.
- To publish at least two editions of the department's on-line journal.
- To upgrade technology, primarily for broadcast journalism program.
- To advise, encourage students in curricular and media-related extracurricular activities.

Assessment Activities

We continued to rely on external evaluation, external input, graduating senior exit interviews, course evaluation by students and a media event survey as our primary assessment activities.

External evaluation

Nine of our students **completed internships** during the 2007-2008 academic year. The following are the assessments of their performance made by the work place supervisor:

Intern	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Internship Agency
Bessenger	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	Florence Red Wolves
Downer	5	3	4	4	4	5	4	5	3	5	Cumulus Broadcasting
Durant	4	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	<i>Morning News</i>
Jackson	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	<i>Morning News</i>
Landry	3	4	4	5	4	3	4	5	4	4	Quantum Broadcasting
McGuire	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	FMU Sports Information
O'Conner	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	Cumulus Broadcasting
Plunkett	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	McLeod Medical Center
Wilkes	4	4	4	5	4	3	4	5	4	4	Quantum Broadcasting
	38	38	39	42	41	40	40	43	39	42	
Averages	4.22	4.22	4.33	4.67	4.56	4.44	4.44	4.78	4.33	4.67	

The scale was from 1 to 5, **1 unsatisfactory** to **5 exceptional**.

The lowest score in any category numerically was **3, above average**. The most common rating was **5 exceptional**. The 10 items assessed were: **1** Quality of work, **2** Production, **3** Attitude toward criticism, **4** Cooperation with others, **5** Dependability, **6** Attendance, **7** Initiative, **8** Appearance, **9** Progress made and **10** Overall Assessment. In addition to the numerical assessments, some intern supervisors offered narrative summations:

Angie Bessenger, according to Jamie Young of the Red Wolves, “worked hard to interview all types of people involved with our organization and helped get information out about our players for our fans.”

Terrence Jackson, according to Kimberly Brauss of the *Morning News*, wrote: “Terrence is an exceptional student who seeks more challenges in his page work. One of the few interns who has picked up work quickly and shown interest in the field.”

Jamie Durant was hired fulltime following her internship. Her supervisor at the *Morning News* wrote, “It is my goal to hire Jamie as a member of my reporting staff. Her time management skills and ability to juggle multiple assignments including breaking news coverage are most impressive to me. Her willingness to learn as well as her self-motivation are outstanding. Please send the *Morning News* more student interns like Jamie!”

Alona Landry, according to her supervisor at Quantum, “accomplished more things while interning here at Quantum Communications. Allona progressed quicker while learning every part of on-air radio production, which included her own show on The FIO 102.9, Saturday Mornings.”

Kristina Plunkett, according to Jumana Swindler at McLeod, is “by far the best intern the (McLeod) marketing department has experienced throughout her internship. She gained more and more knowledge and skills that she will put to use in her future career.”

Aiden McGuire, according to Michal Hawkins, University Sports Information Director, is a “hard worker. Production is very good. Has written two profile pieces on student athletes that have been released to the media and posted on the FMU website. Has greatly assisted in the operation of the sports information office. Through the production of game programs and handbook, has learned to use PageMaker design software. Has interviewed coaches and student athletes and assisted at several ball games.”

Jennifer Wilkes, according to her supervisor at Quantum, wrote, “Jennifer always displayed excellent work ethic while interning here at Quantum Communications. So much so she even earned a spot on the air.”

We also required our students to reflect on their own experience in written reports. Jennifer Wilkes, most recently mentioned above, wrote: “Another reason why I enjoyed my internship is because I was not sitting at a desk and taking notes. I was actually doing what I had learned about in class and more.”

DeJuan Connor wrote, “The bottom line is if you are serious about radio and want to succeed in this industry, doing an internship will allow you to get one step closer to your dream job...I encourage current and future students who are interested in a career in radio broadcasting to become an intern at Cumulus Broadcasting... This is not a paid internship, but even though you are not receiving a check for your work, you are still getting paid...with valuable information and work experience.”

Jamie Durant, who was hired by the *Morning News* following her internship, wrote: “I think I have been groomed for the position, since during the first portion of the internship I covered a wide variety of events, but towards the end of that part and the end of the second five weeks, I covered primarily health and environmentally related stories. Some of the articles I wrote during my internship were picked up by the Media General wire service called NewsBank. Two of them made it on the bulletin board in the newsroom as well-researched and written articles.”

Terence Jackson wrote, “Every day is a learning experience at the copy desk and I am putting my educational knowledge to application.”

External Input

Members of the local media were on campus during the past year to accept invitations to speak to students in courses, with faculty and for other purposes. *Morning News* editor Harry Logan was on campus numerous times as were his peers from the market’s television stations. David Hart, WBTW news director, delivered the remarks at the department’s first Honors Ceremony that recognized our top students and praised the department and its students.

Rusty Ray, WPTW anchor/reporter, has been in frequent contact with the department while establishing the station’s U-News site. He and others involved in the program have expressed high regard for the students and the mass communication program at Francis Marion.

Our professional advisory committee, consisting of 10 working media professionals in South and North Carolina, provided us advice and evaluation throughout the year. Members came to campus individually and communicated through email and telephone.

Exit Interviews

More mass communication students were graduated this year than anytime in history. Our 36 graduates in the two commencement ceremonies included, for the second straight year, one who earned Summa Cum Laude honors. Lindsay Reilly compiled a perfect 4.0 g.p.a over four years and was awarded the William H. Blackwell Award. She was the only one of the four with a perfect g.p.a. who also graduated with university honors. She and 34 classmates completed exit interview forms summarized below. These forms are on file in the department.

The exit questionnaire is more comprehensive in narrative form, but includes answers to the eight quantitative questions across the top of the chart. The assessment scale is from **1** poor to **10** excellent. The top third of the chart summarizes responses from each commencement.

The middle chart itemizes responses for spring 2008 graduates and the bottom chart itemizes the December 2007 class.

The questions are enumerated across the top of the chart. They are: **2** How much has your major prepared you for employment or graduate school? **3** How satisfied are you with the career guidance? **4** What is your assessment of the Mass Com program? **5** What was the quality of the mass com courses? **6** How do you rate your instructors' knowledge of the courses taught? **7** How do you rate the preparation your instructors put into the courses taught? **8** How would you rate the variety of courses offered in mass communication? **9** How satisfied are you with the faculty accessibility outside the classroom?

*Senior Exit Interview
2007-2008*

Total	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
S	151	149	146	155	172	160	145	156
F	152	141	149	150	164	156	142	163
Total	303	290	295	305	336	316	287	319
Ave	8.7	8.3	8.5	8.7	9.6	9	8.2	9.1

2008	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
s1	8	3	5	7	8	7	5	8
s2	10	9	8	9	10	7	8	9
s3	8	8	9	9	10	9	9	9
s4	8	6	5	6	8	6	5	5
s5	8	7	7	8	10	9	9	8
s6	10	10	9	9	10	9	8	10
s7	8	10	8	9	10	10	7	7
s8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
s9	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
s10	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	10
s11	9	10	10	9	10	10	8	10
s12	4	2	5	6	10	8	10	7
s13	9	10	8	9	10	10	8	10
s14	9	9	10	10	10	9	8	9
s15	7	9	7	8	9	9	8	9
s16	8	8	9	9	10	10	7	8
s17	8	10	8	9	9	9	8	9
s18	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Avg.	8.39	8.28	8.11	8.61	9.56	8.89	8.06	8.67
	151	149	146	155	172	160	145	156

Senior Exit Interview

2007	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
f1	10	10	9	9	10	9	8	10
f2	10	9	9	9	9	9	9	10
f3	10	9	9	9	9	9	9	10
f4	9	7	8	8	10	9	7	8
f5	9	7	7	7	9	9	7	9
f6	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10
f7	7	5	6	7	9	7	6	8
f8	8	9	8	8	10	8	6	10
f9	8	8	9	9	10	8	10	10
f10	10	10	10	10	10	10	8	10
f11	8	7	9	8	9	10	7	8
f12	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
f13	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
f14	8	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
f15	8	8	8	9	10	10	10	10
f16	7	2	8	9	10	9	9	10
f17	10	10	9	8	9	9	7	10
Avg.	8.9	8.3	8.8	8.8	9.6	9.2	8.4	9.6
	152	141	149	150	164	156	142	163

Media Event Survey

Approximately 30 of our students attended a QEP media event in November and 27 rated it as an out-of-classroom learning experience. Martha Teichner, a regular correspondent for *CBS News Sunday Morning* since December 1993, was on campus and talked with students about her career as a broadcast journalist.

The following chart was compiled from a 10-question questionnaire submitted by 27 of the students following the appearance. We have not used names but identify the respondents as S1, student 1; S2, student 2. The questionnaires are on file in the department offices.

The questionnaire uses a scale of 1-5. **1 indicates the student agrees “not at all” while a 5 indicates that the student agrees “very much”** with what we call a “Media Participation Event.” The 10 statements numbered across the top of the chart are: **1** This experience confirmed my expectations of the media business it involved. **2** This experience showed me a new side of the media business of which I was previous unaware. **3** Because of this experience, I feel more positive about continuing my related field of study. **4** Because of this experience, I feel less positive about continuing in my related field of study. **5** This experience was nothing at all like I expected. **6** The Mass Communication courses I have taken helped me to understand and participate in the media experience. **7** My overall ability to participate in and understand the media experience was enhanced by my Mass Communication coursework, discussions and lectures. **8** I feel that the media experience was an important feature of my overall educational process. **9** My professors were supportive of my media experience. **10** If given the opportunity, I would participate in this media experience again.

Martha Teichner's Campus Media Participation Event
November 2007

11/02/07	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
S1	5	4	3	1	1	5	5	5	5	5
S2	5	3	2	4	2	5	5	5	5	5
S3	5	4	3	3	5	5	4	5	5	5
S4	5	4	4	2	1	4	4	4	5	5
S5	5	5	5	1	3	5	4	4	4	5
S6	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	5
S7	5	4	4	1	3	4	4	3	5	4
S8	5	4	4	1	2	4	5	5	5	5
S9	3	3	5	5	5	3	3	2	3	5
S10	4	2	1	3	2	5	5	5	5	5
S11	5	4	3	3	2	5	4	5	5	5
S12	3	5	3	3	4	1	1	4	1	2
S13	3	3	3	3	3	5	3	3	3	3
S14	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
S15	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
S16	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5
S17	5	3	5	5	3	4	5	5	5	5
S18	5	5	5	1	1	5	5	5	5	5
S19	5	5	5	5	3	4	5	5	5	5
S20	5	5	5	1	5	5	5	5	5	5
S21	4	4	4	1	2	4	4	4	4	4
S22	3	5	4	1	2	4	4	4	4	5
S23	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
S24	5	3	4	2	1	4	4	5	5	5
S25	5	3	5	1	3	5	5	5	5	5
S26	5	5	4	2	2	2	4	4	5	5
S27	4	4	5	1	3	5	4	5	5	5
Total	122	110	109	73	81	116	115	120	122	127
Average	4.5	4.1	4	3	3	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.7

A few students added *supplemental comments*: 1 "I enjoyed the experience." 2 "I gained so much...This is a once in a lifetime experience for me." 3 "Thoroughly enjoyed the interview." 4 "I would rather her speak about the issues." 5 "I thought the Q&A session was very interesting." 6 "Her visit was very insightful and enlightening."

Summary and Assessment

Thirty-six mass communication students were graduated this year; a record high. Among them was Lindsay Reilly, a Blackwell Award winning and our first perfect 4.0 graduate along with another student graduating magna cum laude and three students cum laude. That quintet represented nearly 25 per cent of our 21 spring graduates. Mass Com majors comprised 35 percent of all B.A. degrees awarded in the spring.

Our department offered 76 courses this year in mass communication and speech. The most current information from the registrar's office is that we have 142 majors and 27 minors and as a service course

to the university taught more than 750 students in speech courses. Both our major and minor are at higher totals than last year at this time, but it should be noted that a significant percentage of these are in the self-declared category. That intent is the first step in being admitted to the major which requires applicants to meet minimum academic benchmarks.

The external evaluation by supervisors of internships and the responses from the interns indicates mutual satisfaction. Our *providers rated* our nine students a composite 4.67 on a scale of 5, or *excellent*. Students likewise narrated their evaluation of the experience, using mostly superlatives.

The external input was also positive from the members of the local media and our professional advisory committee as is specified above. Our senior exit interviews reflect the responses of 35 of 36 graduates, or 97 percent. On a scale where 10 was excellent, the average assessment of the program was 8.5 and higher on all but two areas: 8.3 on career guidance and 8.4 on variety of courses. Both of those areas are being addressed.

The chart of student responses to the student media event was positive both quantitatively and qualitatively. This was an on-campus discussion students had with CBS correspondent Martha Teichner in November. Twenty-one of the 27 students who responded indicated they would very much like to participate in a similar media experience again.

Summary of Issues and Actions

We replenished our program by hiring two qualified faculty members possessing diverse skills and backgrounds. That enabled us to continue to calibrate our curriculum with evolving standards of the professions. Maria Lundberg is our first colleague possessing both on-camera and producing professional experience. She developed a course teaching broadcast presentation skills. She also began upgrading the aging technology in her field. Garry Griffith, former broadcaster of the Myrtle Beach Pelicans, won approval of a sports broadcasting course, an important step in developing our proposal for a fifth track: sports communication.

We also took significant steps toward expanding experiential learning opportunities for students. A department standing committee to monitor QEP activities was created, a new practicum course launched into the approval process and a partnership with WBTW created a U-News site. The latter provides a community-wide platform and wider exposure for student-produced news, both in print and broadcast. The practicum, like the internship, will give students hands-on learning opportunities but will begin as early as a student's sophomore year. One requirement of the internship is that a student be of senior standing.

We also initiated a major effort to upgrade the broadcasting facilities. A storage room has been refurbished, newer computers added and an IT grant of \$10,000 obtained to provide more video editing capabilities. Two of our faculty earned promotion in rank this year while another secured a lecturing invitation at two universities in Taiwan.

We also initiated an effort to communicate with our alumni, now approaching 300. Two on-line sites were started by the Student Media Association with department encouragement. One is the popular social networking website, Facebook, and the other is a discussion group on Yahoo.

Primary Issues Identified and Actions

Bold face indicates 2007-2008 activity

Issues of Concern 2003-2008	Actions Taken
Hiring and replacing qualified faculty with diversity of skills and demographic background.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added faculty with web/ photography skills. • Added faculty with broadcast performance skills. • Added first tenure track female 2005, two others since. • Added first tenure track African American.
Issues of Concern 2003-2008	Actions Taken
Calibrating curriculum with evolving standards of the professions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added 10 courses including Broadcast Presentation Skills and Introduction to Sports Broadcasting. • Consolidated History of Broadcast and Print Journalism. • Reconfigured courses in Convergence Journalism track. • Separated Media Law and Ethics, 2007. • Created skills ladder to show connectivity of courses. • Created editing labs for video editing and photojournalism. • Added two speech courses. • Opened discussions with the English Department to offer a cooperative visual journalism minor. Discussions with the Graphics Arts reached a stalemate.

Issues of Concern 2003-2008	Actions Taken
Adjusting the programs: foundation and track requirements in major, minor and collateral.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deleted public relations from Convergence track. • Developed collateral in speech, mass communication. • Changed track requirements to permit greater choices. • Fifth track developed; to be proposed next year.

Issues of Concern 2003-2008	Actions Taken
Advancing academic integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed academic honors code and pledge. • Developed and implemented admission form for major. • Instituted a minimum grade of C in all prerequisite courses. • Posted honor code to department website.

Issues of Concern 2003-2008	Actions Taken
Expanding experiential learning opportunities for students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more and diverse internships. • Posted updated internship brochure to web site. • Established a departmental QEP committee. • Drafted assessment tool for experiential learning. • Partnered with WBTW for U-News platform. • Prepared practicum course. (Approved by AAC and will advance through the final approval process next year).

Issues of Concern 2003-2008	Actions Taken
Connecting with professionals beyond campus borders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established Professional Advisory Committee. • Hired WBTW news director as adjunct faculty. • Employed Morning News reporter as teaching assistant. • Having professionals on campus: Martha Teichner, CBS and David Hart, WBTW, for major events. • Created social web sites to link alumni and students.

Issues of Concern 2003-2008	Actions Taken
Encouraging, advising, monitoring student progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created and updated department tracker of majors. • Circulated pre-advising circulars each semester. • Reactivated Student Media Association. • Sponsored 1st department honor ceremony. • Add student resources to department web page.

Issues of Concern 2003-2008	Actions Taken
Obtaining designated classroom and updating technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchased 4 video cameras for broadcast track 04. • Added five I-Mac computers for video editing. • Added six digital cameras for photojournalism. • Secured 25 site licenses for Adobe Creative Suites. • CEMC 107 remodeled, newer computers added as video editing suite for broadcast journalism. • New equipment ordered with \$10,000 IT grant.

Issues of Concern 2003-2008	Actions Taken
Encouraging global awareness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numerous foreign students enrolled in our courses. • Multiple FMU students studied abroad. • Chair visits colleagues at sister college in England. • Foreign Reporting added to International Studies. • Faculty member lectured during summer in Taiwan at two different universities.