

JMC MAJ Assessment Program December 2008

Direct Measures

Comprehensive Exams: JMC requires all graduating candidates to submit to a written comprehensive examination on five core areas: ethics, media history, media law, JMC research and mass communications theory. Answers are reviewed by a faculty panel.

Portfolio Review: Graduate students must submit a graduation portfolio consisting of a copy of the research project from the JMC research course and either the thesis or another formal research paper from a JMC 600 level class. If the student completes a graduate level internship, the evaluation from the immediate supervisor is included in the portfolio. All papers are to be reviewed by graduate faculty.

Indirect measures

Awards: JMC enters award competitions at the graduate and undergraduate level. Graduate students won five awards for production in the last year. The most significant award was the Collegiate Broadcaster Award for a sports documentary.

Focus Groups: Each assessment day, graduate students participate in a focus group to gather information about their impression of the J-School.

Research Presentation: Each graduate student involved in a research project presents his or her finding to the members of the graduate faculty during the afternoon of assessment day.

Analysis

Data collection just began in 2008. Data is still being assembled. Faculty met twice in 2008 to discuss MAJ assessment. First reviews of data under the new system will not be available until 2009. Prior to this year, comprehensive exams were the sole measure of assessment.

Objectives

1. Can articulate ethical responsibilities and implications of decisions faced by professional communicators. Measure: comprehensive exam/ethics area.
Finding: All seven students passed comprehensive exam question. Action taken: Faculty are reviewing the ethics offerings at the graduate level
2. Can articulate principles of relevant media law and freedoms of expression. Measure: Comprehensive exams. Finding: All seven students passed comprehensive exam. Action: faculty are reviewing law offerings at graduate level.

3. Can articulate the historical context of mass communications. Measure: comprehensive exams. Finding: All seven students passed. Action: none taken.
4. Can articulate the theoretical framework of normative mass communication function. Measure: Comprehensive exams and portfolio review. Findings: All students passed exam. Action: Portfolio review added and data is being collected.
5. Can synthesize information from primary and secondary sources. Measure: Portfolio review. Findings: Data being gathered. No additional action taken.
6. Demonstrate the basic methods of research, carry out a valid survey. Measure: Standardized learning objectives in JMC 602-Media Research, comprehensive exams and portfolio review. Findings: Six of seven students passed comprehensive exam question. Portfolio data still being gathered.

Analysis/ Planned Action

JMC graduate faculty have agreed to meet regularly in 2009. The first meeting is set for January 22. Topics include a review of course offerings, creation of a rubric for portfolio review and a portfolio review session. Faculty have agreed to continue the research presentation portion of assessment day activities.