

***Trends, Gaps & Opportunities***  
***CoJMC Retreat Discussion I***  
***Aug. 21, 2020***



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*Trends*



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## Trends and Challenges

- Higher ed budget situation is a little depressing, but we know we are doing better than our peers
- Increased competition for students – from other state schools and community colleges
- Focus on collaboration and project-driven teams
- Industries are constantly changing – changing with technology
- Industry is evolving - TV becomes online video/ broadcast has become podcasts / newspapers are apps and alerts



## Trends and Challenges

- Pandemic has changed the status quo for remote work
- Media is focusing more on distribution of content
- Students need industry change survival skills and a solid toolbox to kick start their career
- BRDC/JOUR going the way of ADPR not going to agencies and moving in house
- Industry is shifting more toward ADPR industry and digital communication



## Trends and Challenges

- Demand for data-driven decision making
- Peers are offering majors based on analytics and research
- Learning experience has changed
- We are seeing more interest from non-traditional students, especially for online classes.
- Some students want flexibility to craft their own major. Other students want a lock-step program, so they don't get overwhelmed with choices. Can we offer both options?



*Gaps*



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## **Journalism today is more than just telling the story**

- Rather than repurposing one story for the same audience on multiple formats, we should be telling and formatting the story for each audience.
- We need to focus not just on how to tell great stories but how to get it out there -publishing, sharing, distribution, and measuring impact
- We need to focus on teaching transferable skills and less on preparing for specific jobs



## **We need to teach students industry change survival skills**

- We should be helping students build and design their own careers and businesses
- Students need to understand industries and payment because health and stability as a freelancer is hard
- Students are stringing together freelance work as a career without understanding contracts
- Students need to understand job demand and cycles (election year)





## Are students getting the right foundation?

- We have too many students without a strong writing background who don't even know how to write nut graphs
- Too many of our students are not developing basic journalistic writing skills (SPMC)
- Can we raise the admission standards to assure better performing undergrads?
- Students know what they want but not what they need
- To our knowledge, we are the only Big 10 program that does not require undergraduate research methods
- Students should feel confident about what they learn and see value in what we are teaching them



## **No Ph.D. program and a small master's program**

- At present, only some coursework is taught by master's students. More could be, perhaps, if we had advanced students and a Ph.D.
- The Ph.D. program idea has been raised several times in the past but has repeatedly been shot down. Why?
- Do we have research-skilled faculty to launch a PhD program?
- There was both praise and criticism regarding the amount of coursework in the graduate program.



## Industry Relations

- Need stronger industry relations for internships, first destination jobs, and networking
- From a graduate student perspective, we do not offer a lot of industry relations and networking opportunities; they should also include a more diverse field
- Need across industry for ongoing continued education
- Some industries don't know what they need.





## Other Gaps

- Students produce content for years, but we aren't harnessing that as part of our planning.
- We need to do more to target international students.



*Opportunities*



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## Focus on entrepreneurship

- Teach students to be independent contractors/freelances who build their own audience
- Develop “intellectual futurists” who can predict what jobs are needed next
- Put together pop-ups with alumni who have started their own businesses
- Work with the Colleges of Business/Law to help students understand business/legal issues of freelance work



## **Build our research focus and graduate programs**

- Develop a doctoral program focused on a specific area rather than trying to be general
- Build research and graduate coursework in data analytics
- Expand undergraduate research
- Pursue more certificate programs at the master's level



## Embrace industry change

- Teach transferable skills: research, writing, analytical skills
- Recruit students through course/badging/certificate stacking
- Move away from traditional terminology (journalism and broadcasting makes students think of jobs, not skills)
- Promote journalism degree as foundational skill set: writing and research based on data and a chain of evidence
- Expand podcasting, streaming, and different delivery formats that are more digital native
- Need to better profile our alums in non-journalism jobs
- Focus on content creation for tech industries





## Grow Online

- Rethink what we do and move more into the online space
- We always thought teaching undergrads online was heretical – maybe we were wrong
- Create online-only degree programs, both at the bachelor's and master's levels.
- We have learned that teaching undergraduates synchronously has some real upsides and may deserve a regular place in our curriculum.
- Could create opportunities to hire nontraditional faculty who teach our classes but are not on campus.



## **Expand into professional development**

- Conduct training for news stations and businesses
- Could open pop-ups to industry
- Can we partner better with area companies to provide tailored coursework for their employees?
- Some, such as a TV station, have come to us, seeking training for their staffers.



## Explore opportunities for collaboration

- Establish a Jacht-model video production program
- Look at the Nebraska extension model for how we can keep rural journalism alive
- Share guest speakers across the college
- Partner with the College of Law on a BA to JD
- Develop more classes that would appeal to the general student population – like a JGEN PR class for nonmajors
- Pursue more certificate programs at the bachelor's level – like game studies

