

A SURVEY OF 102 MASTER'S PROGRAMS
IN SCHOOLS OF JOURNALISM AND MASS
COMMUNICATION: ADMISSION AND
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
AND PROGRAM STRUCTURE
AND CONTENT

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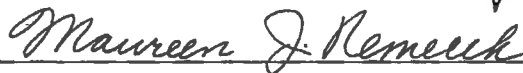
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Thesis approved:



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Dean of the Graduate College

This thesis is dedicated to
my father
David Garrison Briggs
and my mother
Yvonne Armande Briggs

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Should the useful in life,
or should virtue,
or should the higher knowledge
be the aim of our training?

--Aristotle

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

General

An increasing number of college graduates elect to continue their education beyond a baccalaureate degree, yet little current information is available on the goals, requirements and contents of master's programs, particularly in the field of journalism and mass communication.

Controversy over the proper goals of, and even the need for, graduate education in this field has existed since the 1800s. Such questions as whether programs should be professional or theoretical, broad or specialized, rigid or flexible, are still debated today.

Not surprisingly, questions such as these have found numerous answers in the diversity of master's programs throughout the country. This thesis surveyed graduate schools of journalism and mass communication in the United States to identify the similarities and differences in the current requirements for admission and graduation, as well as in the structure and content, of their master's programs.

Background

Graduate education in the United States did not exist until the founding of the Johns Hopkins University in 1876 (Grigg, 1965). From the start, questions were raised over the purpose of graduate school. Some placed emphasis on the search for new knowledge while others believed in serving utilitarian needs, such as the preparation of students for employment after graduation (Berelson, 1960).

Schools of journalism and mass communication shared in the debate over the purpose of graduate education. Some favored an academic approach, some a professional approach, and others a combination of the two. However, views change with the demands of the times and there has been speculation that journalism master's programs are increasingly professional in nature. For example, a 1986 survey found that professional or creative projects were replacing theses in many journalism master's programs. Thirty-one out of 43 graduate schools of journalism accepted a project instead of a thesis, a fact that the authors saw as evidence of an increased emphasis on professionalism (Singletary and Crook, 1986).

In terms of enrollment, graduate programs represent an important aspect of mass communication education. Of the more than 33,500 degrees granted by journalism and mass communication programs in the 1987-88 academic year, seven percent were graduate degrees (approximately 2,250

degrees). In the 13-year period from 1976 to 1988, graduate enrollment in journalism and mass communication increased 9.5 percent, compared with an 8.3 percent increase nationally. And, whereas undergraduate enrollments in these programs were nearly identical for 1987 and 1988, graduate enrollments grew nearly 10 percent in that same time (Becker, 1989).

Although, numerically at least, graduate programs represent an increasingly important part of mass communication education, there is little current, comparative information on the characteristics of this education.

The most recent comprehensive study available is Michael Ryan's 1979 survey of journalism education at the master's level, which compared criteria for admissions, structures of master's programs and faculty-perceived problems (Ryan, 1980).

Statement of the Problem

The problem facing educators today is:

a) There is a lack of current information about what graduate education at the master's level consists of in schools of journalism and mass communication. What is taught? How is it taught? Why is it taught?

b) There is little current information about the goal/direction of graduate education in journalism and mass communication.

Purpose of the Study

The latest comprehensive study comparing the characteristics of master's programs in journalism and mass communication throughout the United States is 12 years old. There is a need to update this information. The purpose of this study is to fill some of the gaps in current information about graduate education in journalism and mass communication at the master's level.

Significance of the Study

The information acquired from this study will be of value to faculty and administration concerned with graduate education. It will enable them to compare admissions requirements, and the structures and contents of their programs. It will also provide a basis for comparison with previous studies to determine what changes have occurred in journalism and mass communication graduate education during the past decade.

Research Objectives

Specifically, this study proposes to answer the following questions:

What are the requirements for admission and graduation in master's programs in journalism and mass communication?

What are the structure and content of master's

programs in journalism and mass communication?

To find answers to these questions, a survey was conducted of the graduate coordinators of 120 schools of journalism and mass communication in the United States, as listed in the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication 1991 yearly directory.

Outline of Remainder of Study

The remainder of this thesis is organized in the following manner: Chapter II reviews previous research in the area of master's programs in journalism and mass communication. Chapter III explains the methodology used to obtain answers to the research questions and describes the questions chosen for the survey. The responses to the survey are presented in Chapter IV. Finally, a summary of the study and its findings, a comparison of these findings with previous findings, conclusions and suggestions for further research are found in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter is a review of the literature of graduate education in journalism and mass communication. It includes a brief history of graduate education in journalism and mass communication in the United States, and shows how this history has resulted in the differing curricular paths taken by schools today. This chapter also reviews what has been published, primarily in the last twenty years, concerning the issues, research and philosophies in this area of academe.

History

The origins of American graduate education in journalism and mass communication can be found in both the history of journalism education in the United States as well as in the history of graduate education in Europe and, later, in the New World. Accordingly, the following historical review is comprised of three parts: the history of journalism education, the history of graduate education and the history of graduate education in

journalism and mass communication.

History of Journalism Education

The idea of journalism's having a place in institutions of higher learning originated more than a century ago in 1869. General Robert E. Lee, president of Washington College (now Washington and Lee University), designed a plan to award 50 "press scholarships" to students at the College. Young men intending to go into journalism could pay their tuition by working at the local printing plant while taking the classical course of instruction at Washington College. Unfortunately, Lee -- and his plan -- died a year later. Cornell University became the first actually to offer instruction in journalism in the 1870s (Lindley 1).

Journalism education was slow to catch on and underwent several starts and stops. The Cornell program, for example, attracted few students and only one was given a certificate in journalism in 1876 (Lindley 1). The first full curriculum in journalism was offered by the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania. The former financial editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, Joseph French Johnson, organized the curriculum in 1893, but it lasted only until his departure for another campus in 1901. Meanwhile, separate courses and groups of courses related to journalism were being taught in schools of commerce and departments of English across

the country. In 1908, the first separate school of journalism opened at the University of Missouri (Emery 3).

Journalism education's position was enhanced in 1903 when Joseph Pulitzer endowed a school of journalism at Columbia University with two million dollars. At Pulitzer's request, Charles W. Eliot, president of Harvard University, suggested a curriculum of news and editorial writing, business and advertising methods, and mechanical techniques. Pulitzer rejected this because it did not distinguish between the newspaper as a business and editorial work as a profession (Lindley 2).

Pulitzer wanted his endowment to:

... begin a movement that will raise journalism to the rank of a learned profession, growing in the respect of the community as other professions far less important to the public interests have grown (Lindley 3).

In 1906, Willard G. Bleyer organized journalism instruction at the University of Wisconsin, incorporating the ideas of both Pulitzer and Eliot. He combined instruction in social sciences with that in journalism to give his students a broad background and some technical training. This combined approach influenced many successive journalism programs (Ross 468).

After a slow beginning, journalism education grew rapidly, from four schools with four-year programs in

1910 (Missouri, Wisconsin, New York University, University of Washington) to 54 in 1927 (Lindley 4), to 404 in 1990 (Becker 50).

History of Graduate Education

In European universities centuries ago, the titles of "master" (and "doctor") were licenses to teach, and were usually restricted to the faculties of theology and philosophy. Originally, there was no distinction between the two titles. English universities were the first to transform the doctorate into a higher degree, attached to the higher-ranked faculties of theology, law and medicine, and the master's into a lesser degree, attached to the lower-ranked faculties of grammar and arts. In the twentieth century, both degrees expanded into the disciplines of the arts and sciences as well as into professional fields (Grigg 53-5).

Graduate education in the United States did not begin until 1876 with the founding of Johns Hopkins University. American institutions of higher learning had their roots in, and were therefore greatly influenced by, the various European systems of education. Where undergraduate schools, such as Harvard College and the College of William and Mary, were shaped by English universities, graduate schools, for the most part, were modeled after the German system (Grigg 1).

The German concept of graduate education emphasized

research and independent investigation, initiated from within the university. To this, the American universities added research programs that were seen as a public service and therefore originated from outside the university (Grigg 3).

This view of research as a public service was largely the result of the Morrill Act of 1862 which established the land-grant colleges, agricultural colleges whose research responded to the problems of the agricultural communities from which their support came (Berelson 13). Professional schools, such as colleges of engineering, business administration and journalism, responded in the same way to the needs of the community.

Because the land-grant college movement and graduate education began at about the same time, both often coexisted within the same university. Cornell University, for example, originally had on its campus a land-grant college, a private university, a liberal arts college, and a German-style graduate school (Grigg 3). This often meant that two very different ideas of research existed side by side:

Where they coexisted, an eclectic type of university system resulted. Although both ideas of research had good points as well as deficiencies, the results were an ambiguous definition of the goals of university life and an unclear set of criteria for success.

In terms of the public image of the American university, even in the early 1900s, there was difference of opinion, and one could not go to the universities to find out exactly what they did, for the university itself was not sure. It did many things and had many different objectives.

Thus, very early in its development, graduate education was handicapped by its lack of a definite and unified goal. The coexistence of these two concepts of graduate education provided the basis for a split personality from which graduate education has not yet recovered (Grigg 3-4).

History of Graduate Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

The "split personality" of graduate schools was reflected in the debate between those who perceived graduate education as pure academic learning and those who saw it as professional training. This is particularly true in "professional" fields such as journalism. Should journalism/mass communication education be conducted at the graduate or undergraduate level or both? Educators have found varying answers to this question.

Columbia University found one solution, in 1935,

when it pioneered the first exclusively graduate program in journalism. The university dropped its undergraduate journalism program, opting instead for a one-year professional Master of Science:

Applicants for admission (to Columbia) were required to present evidence of a bachelor's degree in arts, letters, philosophy, or science and to pass with satisfaction all other examinations and qualifications stipulated by the faculty as to their scholastic aptitude, moral character, and general fitness for the course. The course was changed to a one-year offering, even more tightly coordinated, more intensive, and more oriented toward the newspaper (Baker 110).

Now, 55 years later, only two other schools have followed Columbia's lead in establishing strictly graduate professional schools of journalism: Northwestern and The University of California at Berkeley.

Most schools offer both undergraduate programs and professional and/or theoretically oriented master's degrees, according to the 1984 Project on the Future of Journalism and Mass Communication Education (14, 26). Of the 404 schools with journalism and mass communication programs in 1990, 401 offered a bachelor's degree program, 161 a master's degree program and 31 a doctoral

program (Becker, 1991, 52). In the past 20 years, graduate student enrollment has gone from 3,010 in 1969, (Emery 4) to 8,062 in 1990 (Becker, 1991, 52).

Philosophies and Goals

Controversy over the purpose and goals of graduate education in journalism and mass communication persists today. Should journalism and mass communication be taught at the graduate or undergraduate level, or both? Should graduate courses be professional or theoretical? Should the graduate emphasis be on practical needs or on the search for new knowledge?

The lack of a unified academic purpose has resulted in divergent opinion on all sides of these issues. These differences of opinion led Rucker (1965) to recommend that the first task of administrators seeking to establish a graduate journalism program was to come up with a philosophy to guide the long-range development of that program. This philosophical base would provide for "orderly growth in which curriculum, student load (and goals), faculty recruitment, and procurement of research materials and equipment are integrated into one functional plan" (11).

Educators have debated whether a master's degree should be considered a stepping-stone to the doctorate or whether it should be regarded as "terminal" in content and intent. In 1956, Leys suggested that, as most (90%)

master's students did not go on to get a doctorate, a "terminal master's degree" was legitimate and should have three objectives: (1) creating a basis for technical competence; (2) maintaining habits of reading and inquiry; and (3) developing professional attitudes.

The problem is to steer a middle course between detailed technique (which is changing from year to year and place to place) and the most theoretical work... not on-the-job training but qualification for on-the-job training.

The terminal Master will normally need both on-the-job training and supervision, but he should be educated to the point where he can master difficult techniques and techniques that require some theoretical knowledge; and he should be educated to the point where he does not have to have continuous supervision (238).

Hovey, writing in 1964, and confronted with the baby boom generation's effects on graduate schools (his graduate students doubled in number in two years at the University of Maryland), questioned the purpose of outdated graduate programs. If the M.A. "is intended as a pre-doctoral enterprise, then one sort of program is called for; and if the degree is intended for something else, then another sort of program is more suitable." Hovey recommended that the M.A. should not be labeled "terminal" nor should it be oriented toward the pre-

doctoral, rather it should be recognized as designating "the satisfactory completion of one year's strenuous study beyond college" (447).

In the ongoing argument over whether the proper place for journalism studies was at the undergraduate or graduate level, Jandoli and Hall (1967) expressed the view that both graduate and undergraduate programs were necessary. They were reacting to the movement started by Columbia University which concentrated on graduate work and eliminated the undergraduate major, a movement they saw as posing "dangers of immense consequence in journalism education" (14).

In an increasingly complicated world, Jandoli and Hall saw the need for journalists with depth of intellectual vision as well as depth of experience. Such journalists, they said, could not be created with only a four-year undergraduate journalism program or with a strictly liberal education followed by a separate 8 1/2-month professional one. Instead, they envisioned "schools capable of offering six to seven-year programs designed to interlace professional and liberal education to provide flexibility and breadth and depth of educational experience now largely impossible" (29).

Crawford (1971) took the opposite view and questioned the advisability of graduate programs in any field of mass communication. He investigated the opinions of working executives in broadcasting, film and

print organizations as to the effectiveness, quality and need of graduate programs in these fields. He found that, although there have been a large number of communications graduate students each year, "their impact has been minimally felt by those in a position to evaluate the benefits of such training."

"Unless the trained and educated communication specialist assumes a greater role than he has in the past, then the value of a graduate degree in communications is still questionable" (350). Crawford recommended making graduate education more relevant.

De Mott (1975) took a more positive view of the impact of graduate students on the professional world. He traced the evolution of journalism education from a shaky experiment to universal acceptance and found that the increased appreciation by the professional world had resulted in numerous fellowships, scholarships, internships and graduate study assistantships for graduate students. In addition, schools of journalism often provided professionals with continuing education in the form of off-campus workshops, seminars and degree programs.

De Mott concluded:

The peculiar thing, in retrospect, is that it has taken otherwise intelligent and perceptive people so long to realize that journalism is an intellectual pursuit of knowledge deserving the

best efforts of a modern university, and that true excellence in preparation for our profession is indispensable to the successful functioning of a democratic society (16).

Lindley (1975) attributed the present-day lack of a unified academic purpose to the confusion in the development of journalism education. He found that journalism education, as a result, had developed in four directions:

1. The traditional or professional approach;
2. The social science approach (journalism is a means by which knowledge of society is transmitted);
3. The humanities approach (journalism is a cultural tool which shapes public taste and works as an ethical force in society);
4. The scientific approach to communication (emphasis is on theories of how and why systems work and the methodological testing of concepts).

The increased complexity of modern communications is another factor in the diversification of sequences in schools of journalism and mass communications. Advertising, public relations, radio and television broadcasting, magazine editing and publication, photojournalism, film production, industrial press, international communication, printing technology, communigraphics are but some of the newer branches that have sprung out of the original news-editorial sequence.

This diversity of academic programs has resulted in conflict over whether some areas of mass communication study are compatible with journalism. Huffman (1976) declared that advertising and journalism could not coexist within the same discipline because they had philosophical, legal and functional differences. Lynn (1976) countered with the argument that advertising and journalism shared a heritage of service to society and that it was myopic to "restrict the perspectives of aspiring communicators" (59).

Toran (1978) described the same problem in public relations. In some schools, "journalism professors are suspicious of what they call 'propaganda' by public relations practitioners and will not allow PR programs to reach full potential" (35). Because Newspaper Fund figures for 1976 showed that 9.6 percent of journalism graduates went into public relations for their first job, Toran concluded that schools should provide an education that enables students to function capably at whatever vocational choice they make.

On the other hand, Ben Bagdikian, former journalist at *The Washington Post* and now mass media critic and professor at the University of California at Berkeley, wrote in 1984 that journalism had no common purpose with advertising or public relations. The purpose of advertising and public relations was "to promote the image of their client, if necessary by withholding or

distorting crucial information." Journalism's purpose was the opposite. He thought advertising and public relations belonged in business school, not journalism school.

Bagdikian also took sides in the controversy over whether journalism should be separated from the study of mass communications. He said that both studies were important and valuable but both had quite different functions:

Communications theory faculties are designed to produce promising teachers and researchers in communications theory. Journalism faculties are designed to produce promising journalism practitioners. Combining the two curriculums produces poor theorists and poor journalists (28).

The debate between practitioners and academicians is an ongoing one. In 1967, Highton, in *The Quill's* "Green Eyeshades vs. Chi-Squares," criticized journalism schools for sacrificing the "Green Eyeshades" ("exponents of hard-nosed, professional newspaper training") to the "Chi-Squares," ("communicologists, methodologists, sociologists, academics"). Journalism schools were becoming schools of communication, Highton said. Ph.Ds were motivated by "academic respectability, research grants, department chairmanships and university empire-building," and research was mostly "statistical tables

and philosophical gobbledygook," of no use to the mass media. As a result, he said, newspaper skills and even newspaper readership were becoming obsolete.

In 1989, Highton updated the debate by declaring that, 22 years later, things were "worsen and worsen." "The dialogue of the deaf... between the methodologists and the media professionals is unspannable. From the professional point of view, much of journalism education is worthless" (61).

In Highton's view, schools of journalism were failing in their role of critical analysis of media performance because "no one bites the hand that feeds it." He quoted Altschull's *Agents of Power*: "Schools of journalism transmit ideologies and value systems of the society in which they exist and inevitably assist those in power to maintain their control of the news media" (61).

The Project on the Future of Journalism and Mass Communication, conducted by the University of Oregon in 1984, came to a different conclusion in the debate between academics and professionalism. It examined journalism/mass communication education in the context of the changing role of mass media in today's global "information society." At a time when communication was developing into a single, electronically-based model, it suggested that educational approaches oriented to just one industry or media would lead to fragmentation. The

Project concluded that an educational program that did not deal with the interrelationships among media could not prepare the students to perform the tasks required of them by the communications industry or by the citizens relying on them in an information-age society.

This integrative approach to the conflict between professionalism and academics was also taken by David Weaver, former president of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC). In his 1988 annual address to the AEJMC, Weaver advocated a blending of the liberal arts and professional traditions:

We in the universities cannot simply turn our backs on the problems and issues confronting the mass media in our society, especially when we are offering degrees in journalism and mass communication. At the same time we can't forsake our obligation to the university tradition... If we don't pay attention to both, how can we hope to make some contribution to both? (823)

As the information society becomes more and more complex, however, it becomes increasingly difficult to keep up with the explosion of knowledge in all fields. Cole (1985) warned that "journalism schools must not attempt to be all things to all people." Every school cannot teach every communication specialty (8).

In spite of the difficult choices confronting

journalism and mass communication educators, Cole saw reasons to be optimistic about the future of graduate education in this field: mass and specialized communication were playing an increasingly vital role in people's daily lives; the number of jobs in communication was at an all-time high; relations with professional mass media people had improved (82 percent of the new-hires on daily newspapers were journalism school graduates); and a rising number of journalism schools were accredited.

Brinkman (1985) also saw a bright future for journalism and mass communication education, a field that he said had matured into an academic discipline in the past 40 years and would last as long as people needed to communicate. He emphasized a need for high quality journalism education in the 21st century.

One of the problems with quality in education, however, was that "quality" had no agreed upon definition, according to Tucker and Mautz (1985). Because it had no universal definition, decision-making in graduate programs was subject to the politics between faculty, administrators and state governing boards, all of whom had different perspectives, goals and definitions of quality.

Kirkwood (1985), who also called for quality in graduate education, said that the accrediting process, "institutional self-regulation," was the best means to ensure it. He warned that if quality was not maintained,

governmental regulation, with its "rigidity" and binding "morass of infinite details," would intervene. To maintain quality, educational institutions had to fulfill three responsibilities:

1. There should be genuine commitment at all levels, but especially in the top administrators, to institutional self-study and planning as a workable form of self-regulation.
2. There should be broad institutional involvement in the process. Trustees, students, and alumni, had rightful roles to play along with faculty and administration.
3. The commitment and involvement should be ongoing, not merely occasional or spasmodic (6).

Graduate Programs

Although much has been written about undergraduate journalism and mass communication programs, relatively little attention has been paid to these programs at the graduate level. This is probably due to the priority given undergraduate education and to the greater number of students in those programs (128,066 undergraduate enrollments in 1990 versus 8,062 master's enrollments) (Becker, 1991, 52).

Conflicting philosophies of graduate journalism and mass communication education inevitably create differences of opinion in all areas of the graduate

programs themselves. Admission requirements, courses, student research, and makeup of faculty have been some of the areas of research as well as controversy.

The effectiveness of graduate admissions criteria was studied by Scotton (1977). He found that traditional admissions criteria, such as Graduate Record Exam scores or undergraduate grade point averages, were not good predictors of success in graduate school. Crawford (1971) advised greater selectivity in choosing graduate students in communications "to determine not only their expectations as they enter the field, but also what they bring to it in the way of attitudes, skills and perspectives" (351).

Stempel (1972) examined the feasibility of developing an entrance exam for prospective master's degree students in journalism. He wrote:

Establishing admission criteria for journalism master's programs has long been difficult because of the diverse goals of these programs. Some students come into master's degree programs with an undergraduate degree in journalism, while others have not had even a single journalism course. And while some are preparing for professional careers, others use the master's program as the first step into an academic career. (6)

Stempel found that journalism and mass communication

schools and departments had limited confidence in the criteria they used in making master's degree admission decisions. Overall grade point average was the one criteria 54% of the schools would use if they had to choose only one.

Ryan's 1979 survey of 77 master's programs in journalism and mass communication revealed that criteria for admission had changed since Stempel's study eight years before. Only one percent of the graduate programs in Ryan's study required professional experience of the applicants; 72 percent of the programs in Stempel's study did. Ryan speculated that this might, in part, be due to the increase in the number of applicants without undergraduate journalism backgrounds.

The four admissions requirements most often used by the schools in Ryan's survey were undergraduate grade point averages, letters of recommendation, Graduate Record Examination scores and statements of goals.

The problem of graduate students without undergraduate journalism and mass communication backgrounds has been investigated. In 1985, Cole found that about 75 percent of graduate students in M.A. programs did not have undergraduate journalism degrees. Saalberg (1970) found that most schools required non-credit undergraduate course work of these students; some, however, gave graduate credit for what should have been undergraduate work.

Hartnett and Katz (1977) discovered that many graduate students ended up in programs that did not suit their goals. Schools had more information about the students than students had about the schools. Hartnett and Katz recommended that students be provided better information about graduate programs to prevent their choosing programs that did not meet their needs or expectations.

To accommodate the needs of students and the community, some schools have taken new directions in curriculum. The Department of Journalism at Temple University, for example, reviewed its M.S. curriculum and found that it suited students who wanted to go into research, teach in secondary schools or pursue a degree beyond the master's. It was less beneficial to professionally-oriented students. To provide students with a choice to suit their goals, the department created a Master of Journalism degree. Riley (1974) described Temple's M.J. program as requiring 40 semester hours of course work, plus six hours for a major professional project, an internship (if the student lacked experience as a practicing journalist), and a comprehensive exam.

Sorensen (1973) described the interdisciplinary master of science program in mass communication at California State University, San Diego. It combined graduate courses in journalism with selected graduate courses in psychology, sociology, telecommunications and

film, and speech communication. Advisers and students tailored individual programs to suit the interests of the student. The journalism department concluded that an interdisciplinary program offered the students better opportunities than a one-department degree.

In 1974, De Mott proposed an interdisciplinary plan of graduate study that would create journalists specialized in interpreting urban problems in society. He suggested combining courses in urbanology with seminars, field trips to urban organizations, observation of urban affairs reporters, special projects and a symposium on criticism of the press.

Some programs interact with the professional community. The Department of Journalism at Northern Illinois University, for example, offered its M.A. degree program to professionals in Chicago. According to Walker (1973), the program was not only popular but also beneficial for several reasons: thesis research served the profession, courses used the increased resources of the city, on-campus instruction was revitalized by lessons of the city, and the university was able to justify rising costs by providing a service to the community.

In his 1979 survey of 77 master's programs, Ryan found that 59 percent of the schools solved their curricular dilemmas by offering more than one option, or "track." The two most common tracks were thesis and

professional. Twenty-two percent offered a thesis track only while 14 percent offered a professional track only.

Most of the master's programs in Ryan's study also offered more than one specialization. Journalism/news-editorial, broadcasting, public relations and advertising were the most popular. Nearly half of the programs required students to take courses outside the journalism field, and 77 percent required students without a background in journalism to take undergraduate prerequisites for no credit. Only 43 percent allowed credit for work experience or internships. Comprehensive exams (oral or written or both) were required of all students in 48 percent of the programs.

Rudolf (1990) discovered that prospective graduate students in journalism and mass communications had no one resource for comprehensive profiles of these master's programs. "Many prospective master's journalism students want to know something about the major areas of study for each school, the admission standards and how long the program will take" (2). For her master's project, Rudolf surveyed and compiled the profiles of 65 journalism/mass communications programs that were accredited by the ACEJMC.

A few studies have focused on the nature of the graduate courses themselves. According to Meyers (1990), there has been an increased emphasis on ethics courses in graduate journalism programs because of public

dissatisfaction with the media's concept of ethical journalism. He recommended that media ethics courses include three components:

1. A skills component (using case studies to teach students how to make ethical decisions based on real-world dilemmas);
2. A conceptual-theoretical component (analyzing the meaning of words, concepts and principles of morality);
3. A critical component (developing the ability to critique the profession by exposure to persons and writings critical of the media).

Because of dissatisfaction with international news coverage by media in the United States, Corrigan (1983) surveyed 76 graduate schools of journalism and mass communication to determine the role journalism schools play in this area. One quarter of the schools offered no courses in international communication or foreign correspondence. Of the 59 schools that did, 13 offered their courses for the purpose of training foreign correspondents, 26 intended to train scholars for research in international communication, and 53 aimed to "give reporters a broad knowledge of comparative political systems and communications structures." Corrigan found that "economic retrenchment" prevented most schools from making a larger commitment to resources or programs in the international area.

Crawford (1971) said there was a need for a basic

course in the operation and function of research techniques, the goal of which should be a familiarity with the use and interpretation of research results, and an awareness of the difference between good and bad research.

Fowler (1986) examined the structure and content of master's level research courses in 69 schools. All the schools he surveyed had a research methods course in their M.A., M.S. or M.C. programs. Most dealt with the tools needed to complete a thesis or research project and more than half required a thesis or project for the degree.

Some educators, however, have advocated dispensing with the thesis in M.A. programs altogether. Hovey (1964) called for "a reduction in the quantity of misdirected pretensions... The majority of our first year (graduate) students do not want and do not need a plunge into the abstruse and esoteric ways of scholarship."

Jackson (1973) described the kinds of professional research projects that students at Indiana could undertake instead of a thesis. Because these developed journalistic or teaching skills, he thought them more valuable to students than a thesis.

Crawford (1971) suggested that research projects "should be linked with the communications problems of real-life institutions and activities" (355).

De Mott (1975) said that the AEJ's newspaper

division task force was looking into the "negligence in the direction given graduate students in developing projects that contribute to a positive ongoing research program of benefit to local professionals" (18).

In 1985, Schweitzer faulted research for becoming increasingly theory-based and less practical. Research should be more relevant to practitioners' problems, he said. "Providing service for professionals is what will ultimately determine the success of schools and departments of journalism" (38).

Ryan's 1979 survey of 77 master's programs revealed that only 25 percent of the programs required a thesis, 12 percent did not permit a thesis and 62 percent had a thesis as an option. In a 1983-84 survey of 43 graduate news-editorial programs, Singletary and Crook found that only 11 of the 43 schools required the thesis, while 31 schools accepted a project instead of a thesis. They interpreted this as evidence of an increased emphasis on professionalism.

Summary

From this broad review of the literature of graduate education in journalism and mass communication, we find that there is little consensus in direction or content of the programs. Diversity and change remain the rule. It is therefore important to keep abreast of the adjustments and trends in this area of education.

Ryan's 1979 survey of 77 master's programs is the only known comprehensive study comparing the requirements and content of graduate programs in journalism and mass communication. Rapid changes necessitate an update of information. This study will help bring knowledge up to date by examining the 1991-1992 requirements and contents of 120 master's programs in journalism and mass communication in the United States.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Chapter Overview

This chapter describes in detail the procedures used in conducting this study. It includes an explanation of the research approach and the research instrument, as well as a description of the plan for collecting, recording and analyzing the data. Methodological assumptions and limitations of the study are also discussed.

Research Methodology

The purpose of this project was to correct the lack of **current** information on what graduate education at the master's level consists of in schools of journalism and mass communication. Answers to the following research questions were sought:

1. What are the requirements for admission to master's programs in journalism and mass communication?
2. What is the structure and content of master's programs in journalism and mass communication?

3. What are the requirements for completion of master's programs in journalism and mass communication?

The research instrument selected for this purpose was a mail questionnaire. This was considered to be the most efficient and cost-effective method to acquire the information needed to answer the research questions.

The population consisted of 120 graduate schools of mass communication in the United States, as listed in the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) 1991 annual directory. A cover letter, a questionnaire and a stamped, addressed return envelope were sent to the master's program coordinator in the journalism/mass communication department of each school. The questionnaire (Appendix A) consisted of 24 questions on the requirements for admission and graduation, and the structure and contents of master's programs in journalism and mass communication.

Selection of Subjects

One hundred and twenty graduate schools of journalism and mass communication in the United States were selected to receive a questionnaire. (A list of the schools included in this study is in Appendix C.)

Names and addresses of schools were listed in the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication 1991 annual directory. The AEJMC directory

is updated yearly and is considered to have the most complete list of graduate programs in journalism and mass communication. All but two schools which were listed as offering a program leading to a master's degree were mailed a survey.

Omitted were the University of Toledo, which offered a master's in education, and the University of Pittsburgh, which offered a master's of fine arts in non-fiction. Norfolk State University listed both a department of journalism and a department of mass communications and was therefore sent two surveys.

Research Instrument

A four-page questionnaire was used to gather the required information. The questionnaire included instructions, return address, telephone number and 24 questions, with space available for additional comment at the end. (A copy of the questionnaire is in Appendix A.)

Enclosed with each questionnaire was a cover letter and a stamped, addressed return envelope. The cover letter (Appendix B) described the subject of the survey, the lack of current information on this subject, educators' need for this information, the necessity for a response from each surveyee, where to return the questionnaire and the deadline for response.

Survey questions were separated into four categories: general, admissions requirements, course

requirements and graduation requirements.

General questions asked whether the program was accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, how many students were currently enrolled, how many of these were international students and what degrees were offered.

Admissions questions asked what tests, scores, or other requirements were necessary for admission to the master's program.

Course questions asked what graduate courses and how many graduate credits were required for the master's degree, what areas of specialization, if any, were available, and whether graduate credit was given for internships and work experience.

Questions on graduation requirements included whether a thesis and/or projects were mandatory for graduation, whether comprehensive exams were required, whether they were written, oral or both, and whether writing skills were formally tested during the graduate program.

Initial and Follow-up Mailings

Cover letters, questionnaires and stamped, addressed return envelopes were mailed to the graduate program coordinators on 6 November 1991. Follow-up questionnaires, cover letters and postage-paid, addressed envelopes were sent on 2 December 1991 to those who did

not respond. The second mailing was identical to the first except for minor changes in the cover letter to the effect that a response had not been received and that a response from each graduate school coordinator was essential for completeness of the study. (Both cover letters are in Appendix B.)

Data Collection and Recording

Return of questionnaires was facilitated by the inclusion of a stamped, addressed envelope with each mailing. Questionnaires were numbered before mailing to identify the respondent. Questionnaire answers were numerically coded and entered into SYSTAT (The System for Statistics).

Analysis of Data

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the information in the responses to the questionnaire. Percentages (i.e., What percent of schools are accredited by ACEJMC?), averages (i.e., What is the average number of international students enrolled in master's programs?) and comparisons (i.e., How does the percentage that requires GPAs compare to the percentage that requires GREs?) were variously used.

Responses to the open-ended questions were categorized and percentages calculated for the number of responses in each category. Comparisons were then made

among the different categories. Responses were also analyzed for accredited programs compared with non-accredited programs.

Methodological Assumptions and Limitations

It was assumed that questionnaires would reach and be answered by the appropriate people. It was also assumed that instructions were clear, questions were understandable, and that answers would be honest.

Academic programs are constantly changing and this can be considered a limitation to this study in the long run. What is accurate today may not remain so for long. However this information is valid for 1991 and creates a basis for comparison with the past and with the future.

Summary

A 24-question survey was mailed to 120 schools of journalism and mass communication to obtain information about their master's degree programs. Responses were coded and descriptive statistics were used to make comparisons among them. Results of this study are valid only for the time-frame in which it was conducted. They are also valid as a comparison with both past and future studies.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

This study surveyed graduate schools of journalism and mass communication in the United States to determine their requirements for admission and graduation, as well as the structure and content of their master's program.

Survey Return Results

In November 1991, questionnaires were sent to 120 graduate schools of journalism and mass communication listed in the AEJMC 1991 annual directory. The initial mailing resulted in the return of 70 questionnaires (58 percent). A second mailing to those that had not responded resulted in the return of an additional 26 questionnaires, for a total response rate of 80 percent after the second mailing.

Five of the 96 returned surveys were not filled out for various reasons: Oregon State University's program would be abolished in June of 1992; the University of Wyoming's M.A. in mass communication was suspended 3 years ago; Middle Tennessee State University's graduate

program did not yet have final approval by the state; and California State University-Chico and Radford University had master's programs that focused on organizational communication and not media. This left 91 usable questionnaires out of the 96 returned.

In addition, some information on 11 of the missing programs was obtained from 1991-92 graduate catalogs and from Rudolf's 1990 profile of 65 accredited master's programs. This brought the total of graduate programs included in this study to 102 out of the 115 remaining, or 89 percent.

Organization of Questionnaire

The questionnaire was divided into four sections:

- 1) General -- concerned with accreditation, enrollment and types of degrees offered.
- 2) Admissions Requirements -- covered tests and other requirements for admission to graduate programs.
- 3) Course Requirements -- included required graduate courses, course and thesis credit requirements, areas of specialization available, procedures for students without an undergraduate background in mass communication, and questions as to whether graduate credit is given for internships and work experience.
- 4) Graduation Requirements -- covered the subjects of theses, professional projects, comprehensive exams and formal tests of writing abilities.

General Questions

The first section of the survey asked:

- 1) Whether the program was accredited by the ACEJMC.
- 2) How many students were enrolled in the master's program.
- 3) How many of these were international students.
- 4) What degrees were offered.

Goals of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) include "the advancement of academic and professional education for journalism, encouragement of communication research, and cooperation with media practitioners in their efforts to raise the standards of their professions." (Emery and McKerns, 1)

Accreditation by the AEJMC's Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) is usually an indication that a program maintains high standards.

Table I (on the following page) shows the responses to the question of whether the journalism and mass communication program was accredited by the ACEJMC. (Undergraduate and graduate programs are accredited as a unit.) Of the 102 programs in this survey, 69 percent were accredited, 31 percent were not.

Table II contains the responses to questions asking the total student enrollment and the total international student enrollment (full and part-time) in master's programs in journalism and mass communication.

TABLE I
 PROPORTION OF PROGRAMS ACCREDITED
 BY THE ACEJMC

Response	Number of Programs	Percentage of Total responses
Yes	70	69
No	32	31
Total	102	100%

TABLE II
 RANGE AND MEAN STUDENT ENROLLMENT
 IN MASTER'S PROGRAMS
 (TOTAL AND INTERNATIONAL)

Range	Mean	# of Responses
TOTAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT		
6-250	59	98
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT		
0-50	9	87

Two programs had the highest proportion (50 percent) of international students to total students: California State-Fresno (30 out of 60) and Utah State (5 out of 10). Seven (8 percent) of the 87 programs that answered the international enrollment question had no international students.

Table III shows the responses to the question asking what types of graduate degrees were offered in programs of journalism and mass communication.

TABLE III
GRADUATE DEGREES OFFERED IN SCHOOLS OF
JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION
(N=102)

Response	% M.A.	% M.S.	% Ph.D	% Other
Yes	76	29	21	22
No	24	71	76	78
No Response	0	0	3	0
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

The "other" degrees offered by 22 percent of the programs were as follows:

MJ (Master of Journalism) - 4 programs.

MAJ (Master of Arts in Journalism) - 3 programs.

MMC (Master of Mass Communication) - 3 programs.

MFA (Master of Fine Arts) - 3 programs.

MOC and MC (Master of Communication) - 2 programs.

MAMC (Master of Arts in Mass Communication) - 1
program.

MIJ (Master of International Journalism) - 1 program.

M.Ed. (Master of Journalism Education) - 1 program.

A number of programs also offered dual degrees in cooperation with other departments, such as the Journalism and East Asian Studies or Journalism and Law degrees of Columbia University.

Of the 102 programs, 84 percent offered only one type of master's degree, either the M.A., M.S., M.J., M.S.J., M.M.C., or the M.I.J. Joint degrees with other departments and M.F.A. degrees were not counted. Sixteen percent of the programs offered two or more types of master's degrees, most commonly the M.A. and the M.S.

Several programs had different types of degrees within the same category. For example, Virginia Commonwealth had two M.S. degrees, one in professional journalism and the other in media management. Northwestern offered an M.S.A (advertising) and an M.S.J. (journalism). These cases were counted as programs offering one category of master's program.

Admissions Requirements

The survey asked "which of the following are requirements for admission to the master's program?" The answers to this question are displayed in Table IV.

TABLE IV
REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO
102 MASTER'S PROGRAMS

Item	% Required	% Not Required	% No Response	% Total
Undergraduate Grade Point Average	94	5	1	100%
Graduate Record Exam	85	15	0	100%
Letters of Recommendation	82	11	7	100%
Statement of Goals	67	25	8	100%
Examples of Professional Work or Writing	20	72	8	100%
Professional Experience	10	84	6	100%
Miller's Analogies Test	6	90	4	100%
TOEFL Scores for International Students	86	13	1	100%
Other Tests	14	77	9	100%

Minimum Grade Point Average

The minimum undergraduate grade point average (GPA) required ranged from 2.0 to 3.5, with a mean of 2.9 and a mode of 3.0 (68%). (N=87) All references to GPAs are based on a 4.0 scale. A number of program directors wrote that the required GPA was based on the last two years of a student's undergraduate work.

GRE Scores Required

Verbal and quantitative combined - ranged from 800 to 1200, with a mean of 980 and a mode of 1000. (N=36)

Verbal only - ranged from 350 to 600, with a mean of 491 and a mode of 500. (N=30)

Quantitative only - ranged from 400 to 600, with a mean of 479 and a mode of 500. (N=13)

Four programs required a 1500 combined GRE score for all three parts (verbal, quantitative and analytical). Some program directors wrote that they were flexible with regard to the actual scores: "Exceptions are made for students who show promise in other ways" (Northeastern); "GRE's can be offset with professional experience" (Colorado State).

Four programs required either the GRE or Miller's Analogies Test.

To determine if there was a significant relationship between requirement of the GRE and accreditation, a chi-square statistical test was performed, and results are

shown in Table V.

TABLE V
CHI SQUARE OF GRE AND ACCREDITATION
(N=120)

	<u>Accredited</u>				
	% No response	% Yes	% No	N Total	% Total
<u>GRE</u>					
% No response	100.00	5.41	27.27	18	15
% Required	.00	81.08	61.36	87	72.5
% Not Required	.00	13.51	11.36	15	12.5
Total N	2	74	44	120	
Total %	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%		100.00%

The chi-square is 21.9. The critical value at $df=4$ with a 99.9% level of confidence is 18.5. There is a significant relationship between the variables. (Accredited programs were more likely to require GRES than non-accredited programs.) The contingency coefficient is .39. The strength of this relationship is definite but small.

Professional Experience

Grand Valley State had a minimum requirement of three years of professional experience; St. Cloud State had a minimum requirement of one year of professional experience.

Minimum TOEFL Score Required

The minimum TOEFL score required ranged from 500 to 650, with a mean of 571 and a mode of 550 (36%). (N=66)

Other Tests

The other tests required for admissions fell into the following categories:

Writing skills test (such as the Medill Newswriting Test) -- four programs.

Typing exam (35 w.p.m.) -- three programs.

Résumé -- one program.

Spoken fluency in a second language -- one program.

Test of Spoken English for international students -- one program.

One program required the completion of certain courses. Marshall University's program director wrote: "After completing 12-15 semester hours of designated courses, students must apply for candidacy. At that point a minimum GPA of B (3.0) is required for admission into the journalism degree program."

Program Requirements and Structure

Graduate Course Requirements

The survey asked "Which of the following graduate courses are required for a master's degree?" Answers to this question are in Table VI.

TABLE VI
GRADUATE COURSE REQUIREMENTS
FOR MASTER'S PROGRAMS
(N=102)

Course	% Required	% Not Required	% No Response	% Total
Research Methods	80	11	9	100%
Theory of Communications	62	29	9	100%
Ethics/Law	31	58	11	100%
Introduction to Communication/ Media and Society	23	68	9	100%
Advanced Reporting/ Newswriting	21	70	9	100%
Editing	14	77	9	100%
Journalism History	9	81	10	100%
International Communication	6	84	10	100%
Internship	5	85	10	100%
Other	35	56	9	100%

Research Methods

Of those programs that required a research methods course (N=82), 55 percent required one semester, 33 percent required two semesters, and 12 percent did not respond.

Internships

The University of Florida said that an internship was "required for non-thesis students only; optional for thesis."

Other Required Graduate Courses

Answers to the question "What other graduate courses are required?" reflect the diversity of types of master's programs available. The following is a list of the other graduate courses required and the schools that require them:

Introduction to Graduate Study: U. Northern Colorado,
U. of Florida, U. South Dakota.

Literature of Journalism: U. of Arkansas-Little Rock,
Louisiana State U.

Literature of Mass Communication/Communication: San
José State U., Brigham Young U.

Communication/Media Management: Colorado State U., U.
of Illinois, Murray State U., Grand Valley State
U., Kent State U., U. of South Carolina, Baylor U.

Core of Seminars: California State U.-Northridge, U.
of Kansas, Ohio State U., Abilene Christian U.
Statistics/Intermediate Statistics: Kansas State U.,
U. of the Pacific.
Mass Communication/Media Effects: U. of Arkansas-
Little Rock, U. of Miami.
Database/Library Research: Grand Valley State U., Utah
State U.
Mass Communication History: Loyola U.
Public Opinion/Persuasion: U. of Miami, Iona College,
Brigham Young U.
Film and Video: Georgia State U.
Speech: Georgia State U.
Consumer Behavior: U. of Illinois.
Readings: U. of Illinois, Murray State U.
Philosophical Concepts: Murray State U.
Organizational Behavior/Communication: Grand Valley
State U., Duquesne U.
Thesis Seminar: Grand Valley State U.
Professional Writing: Duquesne U.
Marketing: Duquesne U.
Journalism Administration: Memphis State U.
History of Economic Thought: Baylor U.
Comparative Economic Systems: Baylor U.
Foreign Internship: Baylor U.

Graduate Credits Required
for a Master's Degree

The next survey question asked for a breakdown of the graduate credits required for the master's degree. Because some programs had different requirements in thesis track than in non-thesis track, when both were given, semester hours in the tracks that allowed or required a thesis were counted. If the program did not have a thesis option, only the total credits were entered. Schools that used quarter hours were tallied separately.

Table VII (Page 53) shows the total (semester and quarter) credits required, the course credits (semester and quarter) required in the thesis option, not counting thesis, and the number of thesis credits (semester and quarter) required in thesis programs.

Graduate Credits Required
Outside J/MC Area

Forty-five programs (44%) had a requirement for some graduate credits outside the mass communication area. For example, the M.A. at the University of Arkansas required "12 hours in journalism and 12 hours in another discipline." Forty-seven percent of the programs had no outside requirement and 9% did not respond. (N=102) The range of outside credits required was 3 to 18 credits, with a mode of 6 credits.

TABLE VII
 NUMBER OF GRADUATE CREDITS REQUIRED
 FOR MASTER'S DEGREE

	Range	Mean	Mode	# of Programs
Total Semester Credits	21-40	31.9	30	81
Total Quarter Credits	36-52	45.4	45	17
Course Semester Credits	15-36	26.6	24	79
Course Quarter Credits	36-44	39	36	13
Thesis Semester Credits	3-9	5.4	6	77
Thesis Quarter Credits	1-16	7.6	9	13

Specializations and Tracks

The survey next asked whether the master's program was:

- A. a general one, or
- B. one that required students to choose an area of specialization, or
- C. one where the choice of specialization was optional.

Answers to this question are summarized in Table VIII.

TABLE VIII

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: IS THE
MASTER'S PROGRAM A GENERAL ONE
OR ARE STUDENTS REQUIRED TO
CHOOSE AN AREA OF
SPECIALIZATION?

	% Yes	% No	% Total	Number of Responses
General program only?	24	76	100%	102
Specialization required?	38	62	100%	102
Specialization optional?	40	60	100%	100

To determine if there was a significant relationship between whether a program was a general one only and

whether it was accredited, a chi-square test was performed. The results are in Table IX.

TABLE IX
CHI SQUARE OF "GENERAL PROGRAM ONLY"
AND ACCREDITATION
(N=120)

	<u>Accredited</u>				
	% No response	% Yes	% No	N Total	% Total
<u>General Program Only</u>					
% No response	100.00	5.41	27.27	18	22.50
% Yes	.00	18.92	25.00	25	20.83
% No	.00	75.67	47.73	77	64.16
Total N	2	74	44	120	
Total %	100.00	100.00	100.00		100.00

The chi-square is 24.5. The critical value at $df=4$ with a 99.9% level of confidence is 18.5. There is a significant relationship between the variables.

(Accredited programs were less likely to be "general programs only" than not. In other words, accredited programs were more likely to require, or have available, a choice of specialization than non-accredited programs.) The contingency coefficient is .41. The strength of this relationship is moderate.

The structures of the various graduate programs were characterized by their many differences. Some offered general programs only, some required a choice of an area of specialization, some offered both a general program and specialized ones. A few did not fit any of these categories, such as the University of Utah, whose program director wrote: "program flexible, not a structured set of required courses," and the University of Iowa: "each student develops her/his own plan of study."

Many programs offered choices of "tracks" or "options" instead of, or in addition to, choices in specializations. For example, the University of Arkansas-Little Rock had three options in journalism: thesis, non-thesis, and professional. The University of Wisconsin-Madison offered a choice of thesis or non-thesis, with both tracks requiring 12 credits in the school of journalism. Thesis-track students completed 12 additional credits of their choice plus the thesis, while non-thesis-track students completed a total of 30 credits.

The University of Oregon, which has both a professional and a thesis-track master's, explained the difference between the two in its 1984 report (*Planning for Curricular Change*):

The professional master's is more in the tradition of the M.B.A. degree with an emphasis on professional development for a specific

career role in the communication field. The more theoretically oriented master's emphasizes research and conceptual knowledge of the field over professional practice (26).

To determine what areas of specialization the graduate programs offered, the survey asked: If students are required to choose an area of specialization, which areas of specialization are available? This should have been worded to say: "If students are required or can choose an area of specialization....," since several programs offered both a general program and a specialized one. Information on the areas of specialization available in the 77 graduate programs that answered this question is provided in Table X on the next page. (The other 25 (24%) programs were general programs only.)

In the "Other" category of Table X, respondents provided these additional areas of specialization:

Mass Communication\Theory: U. Southern Mississippi, Purdue, U. of Southwestern Louisiana, U. of the Pacific.

Organizational Communication: U. of Southwestern Louisiana, U. of the Pacific.

Speech Communication: U. of Alabama, Northeast Louisiana U.

Film and Video Production: American U., U. of Denver, Northeast Louisiana U.

Interpersonal Communication: U. of the Pacific.

TABLE X
 AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION AVAILABLE
 IN MASTER'S PROGRAMS THAT OFFER
 SPECIALIZATONS
 (N=77)

Area	% Available	% Not Available	% No Answer	% Total
Journalism/ news editorial	73	13	14	100%
Public relations	56	28	16	100%
Broadcasting	53	31	16	100%
Advertising	43	41	16	100%
Communication research	25	58	17	100%
Magazine writing/ Publishing	23	60	17	100%
Media management	19	64	17	100%
International communication	17	66	17	100%
Photojournalism	16	67	17	100%
Legal	14	69	17	100%
General communication	13	70	17	100%
Environmental/ science writing	10	73	17	100%
Historical research	10	73	17	100%
Journalism education	5	78	17	100%
Other	29	54	17	100%

Rhetoric: U. of the Pacific.

Technical Writing: Colorado State U.

Public Communication Studies: Syracuse U.

Forensics: U. of North Dakota.

Religious Communication: Marquette U.

New Media: Bowling Green State U.

Visual Communication ("picture editing, graphic design, running a photo department"): Ohio U.

International Journalism: Baylor U.

Procedures for students without
undergraduate backgrounds in
mass communication

The next area of investigation was the question of whether students without an undergraduate background in mass communication were accepted into the Master's programs and, if so, whether they were required to make up the "deficiency" and how.

One hundred percent of those who responded (only two did not) said that they accepted students without an undergraduate background in mass communication into their Master's programs. Several added comments. Northeastern University said: "We do not consider it a 'deficiency.'" Most of our professional track students were not journalism undergrads." Ohio State University said: "Many (without an undergraduate background) are our best."

To the question "Are students without an undergraduate background in mass communication required to make up the deficiency?", 78 percent of the respondents said they were. Thirteen percent said students were not required to make up the deficiency and 7% said that sometimes they were, sometimes they were not. Two percent did not answer (N=102).

To determine if there was a significant relationship between accreditation and the requirement for students without undergraduate programs in journalism and mass communication to make up the deficiency, a chi-square statistical test was performed. Results are in Table XI.

TABLE XI

CHI SQUARE OF "REQUIREMENT TO MAKE UP
UNDERGRADUATE DEFICIENCY"
AND ACCREDITATION
(N=120)

	<u>Accredited</u>			N Total	% Total
	% No response	% Yes	% No		
<u>Require Make Up of Deficiency</u>					
% No response	100.00	8.11	29.55	21	17.5
% Required	.00	81.08	43.18	79	65.83
% Not Required	.00	6.76	18.18	13	10.83
% Sometimes Required	.00	4.05	9.09	7	5.83
Total N	2	74	44	120	
Total %	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%		100.00%

The chi-square is 27.38. The critical value at $df=6$ with a 99.9% level of confidence is 22.5. There is a significant relationship between the variables.

(Accredited programs were more likely to require students without an undergraduate background in journalism and mass communication to make up the deficiency than non-accredited programs.) The contingency coefficient is .43. The strength of this relationship is moderate.

The survey asked those who answered that students were required to make up the deficiency, how many credits of deficiency or undergraduate courses students had to make up. Answers ranged from three to 30 credits, with a mean of 11 credits and a mode of nine credits. A breakdown of the responses is in Table XII on the following page.

The questionnaire also asked how these deficiencies were met. Most answered that they required a core curriculum of undergraduate skills courses, particularly news writing and news editing. Other required courses that were mentioned were statistics, human communication theory, research methods, introduction to graduate studies, survey (in area of specialization), management, introduction to computing, mass communication law, history and ethics, graphics, and economics.

Emerson College required "non-credit workshops based on a case-by-case evaluation" and Baylor University had "a one-on-one tutorial for one semester." Some

TABLE XII

NUMBER OF SEMESTER CREDITS OF DEFICIENCY
OR UNDERGRADUATE COURSES REQUIRED OF
STUDENTS WITHOUT BACKGROUNDS IN
MASS COMMUNICATION AND THE
PERCENTAGES OF PROGRAMS
THAT REQUIRE THEM
(N=70)

Percentage of Programs Requiring it	Credits Required
30	9
21	12
14	15
11	6
4	3
4	20
4	21
3	8
1.5	4
1.5	10
1.5	24
1.5	30

respondents said that how the deficiencies were met depended on the individual's goals and/or degree, and the requirements of the different departments.

A few programs permitted work experience or internships instead of undergraduate course work in the field. The University of Kansas, for example, said that a "waiver (of deficiency courses) is based on professional experience, assessed by committee. Waiver may be partial or complete."

Internships, work experience
for graduate credit.

Some programs gave graduate credit for work experience or internships. While 45 percent of the programs gave graduate credit for internships, only two percent gave such credit for work experience. (See Table XIII.)

Graduation Requirements

Questions in this section of the survey were concerned with the requirements for graduation. These included the master's thesis and projects, comprehensive exams, and a test of writing abilities.

Master's Thesis and
Projects

Master's programs in journalism and mass communication differed greatly with regard to whether

TABLE XIII
WHETHER GRADUATE CREDIT IS GIVEN FOR
INTERNSHIPS, WORK EXPERIENCE
(N=102)

	Internships	Work Experience
% Yes	45	2
% No	54	98
% Sometimes	1	1
Total	100%	100%

theses were mandatory. Some required a thesis and did not permit professional projects or courses instead, while others did the opposite. Some had a choice of thesis or non-thesis tracks. Others had requirements that varied according to the specialization, such as the University of Georgia which required a thesis in its M.A. program but did not allow one in its M.M.C. program--only courses. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln was the only program requiring both a professional project and a thesis.

Table XIV shows respondents' answers to questions that pertain to the thesis and master's projects.

Those who answered that they allowed students to take courses instead of producing a thesis were asked how many credits were required in the place of a thesis. The 35 responses ranged from one to 15 credits, the mean was 6.25 credits and the mode was 6 credits (46 percent of the responses).

Statistical analysis showed that there was no significant relationship between the requirement for a thesis and accreditation of programs.

TABLE XIV
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS REGARDING THE
MASTER'S THESIS AND PROJECTS
(N=102)

	%	%	%	%	%
	Yes	No	For Certain Tracks	No Response	Total
Is a thesis required?	23	54	23	0	100%
Is a thesis optional?	50	26		24	100%
Is a thesis not allowed?	(Allowed) 73	(Not allowed) 4		23	100%
Are reports or projects allowed instead of a thesis?	61	36		3	100%
Are courses allowed instead of a thesis?	34	63		3	100%

Comprehensive Exams

The following three questions on the survey pertained to comprehensive exams administered at the end of master's programs. Responses to these questions are in Table XV.

TABLE XV
RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ON REQUIREMENTS
FOR COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS
(N=102)

	% Yes	% No	% Other	% No Response	% Total Response
Is a comprehensive exam required of all students?	53	37	(In certain tracks) 3	7	100%
Is a comprehensive exam required in thesis track only?	1	73	(Only have thesis track) 11	15	100%
Is the comprehensive exam oral, written or both?	(Oral) 10	(Written) 33	(Both) 21	36	100%

Of the 65 respondents to the question of whether the exam was oral, written, or both, 51 percent said it was written, 33 percent said it was both, and 16 percent said

it was oral.

Statistical analysis showed that there was no significant relationship between the requirement for comprehensive exams by all students and accreditation of programs.

Three percent of the programs fell into a "Sometimes oral, sometimes written" category. At San José State University, the University of Florida and the University of West Florida, students in thesis-track took oral exams while those in "non-thesis" or "project" tracks took written exams. Also in this category was The University of Nevada-Las Vegas, which required the oral comprehensive of thesis-track students, and an oral plus an eight-hour written for those in non-thesis track.

Emerson College required a comprehensive exam of those doing projects and not of those doing a thesis. Iona College had a mandatory comprehensive exam for those taking courses but not for those producing a thesis.

Test of Writing Abilities

The final questions asked whether writing abilities were formally tested during the master's program, and, if so, at what point in the program.

Twenty-nine percent of the programs did have some sort of formal testing, 61 percent did not, and ten percent had no response (N=102). Many of those who answered that they had no formal test said that students'

writing abilities were evaluated by means of writing assignments throughout the program.

Statistical analysis showed that there was no significant relationship between testing of writing abilities and accreditation of programs.

Respondents who answered that they did have formal testing of students' writing abilities were asked: "at what point in the program?" Answers were as follows:

Before admittance: U. of North Dakota.

Entrance test on writing skills: Columbia, Duquesne U., Point Park College, Ohio U.

First semester: Iowa State U., U. of Missouri, U. of Oklahoma, Temple U., Marshall U., West Virginia U., U. of North Carolina.

Second research course: U. of South Dakota.

During production of thesis: U. of Washington.

Written comprehensive exam: U. of Kansas, Murray State, Northeast Louisiana U., Texas Christian U.

In answer to this same question, California State-Fullerton wrote only: "student must meet graduate level writing requirement." Florida International University wrote, "following acceptance into program," but did not specify when or how. Emerson College said, "We are considering a formal writing examination."

Summary

This study confirms the great diversity in goals and organization of master's programs in journalism and mass communication today. Programs vary widely in enrollment size (from six to 250 students), in focus (from general programs to highly specialized ones), and in the requirements for theses, projects, comprehensive exams, and tests of writing abilities.

However, similarities can be found in several areas, particularly in admission requirements. Ninety-four percent of the programs asked for the undergraduate grade point average, 85 percent of the programs asked for graduate record exams, and 82 percent of the programs asked for letters of recommendation.

Similarities also are found in graduate courses and specializations. More than half of the programs required graduate courses in research methods (80%), and theory of communication (62%). Of those master's programs that had specializations available, 73 percent offered journalism/news editorial, 56 percent included public relations, and 53 percent had broadcasting.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Mankind finds itself in the midst of rapidly changing times that some have called the "information age." The need to communicate, from the individual level to the global, has never been greater. Mass communication in all its forms plays an increasingly vital role in disseminating this information.

As never before, mass communication is crucial in picturing the world around us and just as crucial in helping us cope with that world. This is true not necessarily because of any one medium but because of the prevalence and totality of all media. It will become even more demonstrable in the future as technology maintains its relentless march... Communication between individuals -- and mass communication among peoples and specialized audiences of all kinds -- will surely be with us always (Cole, 8).

As the field of mass communication assumes greater

importance, so does the education of future mass communicators. Yet there is little up-to-date comparative information available about the academic programs in this discipline, particularly at the graduate level.

This study was designed to identify the current requirements for admission and graduation, as well as the structure and content, of master's programs in journalism and mass communication in the United States.

Graduate coordinators of 120 master's programs were surveyed by mail in November/December 1991. Eighty percent of these responded. (Five program coordinators disqualified themselves for various reasons.) Partial information on 11 of the missing programs was obtained from other published sources, resulting in a total of 102 programs included in this study.

Answers to the following research questions were sought:

1. What are the requirements for admission to master's programs in journalism and mass communication?
2. What is the structure and content of master's programs in journalism and mass communication?
3. What are the requirements for completion of master's programs in journalism and mass communication?

The four top admissions criteria required for master's programs were found by this study to be: undergraduate grade point average (94%), Graduate Record

Exam (85%), letters of recommendation (82%), and a statement of goals (67%). (Table IV) Examples of professional work or writing was required in 20 percent of the programs and professional experience by 10 percent of the programs. For international students, TOEFL scores were necessary in 86 percent of the programs. Chi-square analysis showed a significant relationship between requirement for GREs and accreditation of programs. Accredited programs were more likely to require GREs than non-accredited ones.

The structure and content of master's programs showed great diversity. M.A. degrees were awarded by 76 percent of the programs, M.S. degrees by 29 percent of the programs, and "Other" degrees by 22 percent of the programs. (Table III) Eighty-four percent of the programs offered only one type of master's degree, whereas 16 percent offered two or more types, most frequently the M.A. and the M.S. Some had several categories of degree within the M.A. or M.S. type, such as the "M.S. in Advertising" and the "M.S. in Journalism."

Seventy-six percent of the programs required, or had as an option, the choice of an area of specialization within the degree. The four specializations most often available were: journalism/news editorial (73%), public relations (56%), broadcasting (53%) and advertising (43%). (Table X)

The remaining 24 percent of the programs were general ones only. Chi-square analysis showed a significant relationship between accreditation and programs that were general ones only: accredited programs were more likely to require, or have available, a choice of specialization, than non-accredited ones.

Many programs offered choices of "tracks" instead of, or in addition to, choices of specialization. "Thesis," "non-thesis" and "professional" were the most common.

The three most frequently required graduate courses were: research methods (80%), theory of communications (62%) and ethics/law (31%). (Table VI) Most programs (55%) required one semester of research, whereas 33 percent required two semesters.

Forty-four percent of the programs had a requirement for some graduate credits outside the mass communication area, 47 percent did not.

All programs accepted students without an undergraduate background in mass communication, but 78 percent of the respondents said that these students were required to make up the "deficiency," usually by taking undergraduate courses. Statistical analysis revealed that there was a significant relationship between accreditation and the requirement to make up deficiency courses. Accredited programs were more likely to require make-up courses than non-accredited ones.

Internships and work experience are sometimes given graduate credit. However, this study found that 54 percent of the programs did not give graduate credit for internships and 98 percent did not give graduate credit for work experience. (Table XIII)

A thesis was a requirement for graduation in only 23 percent of the programs, 54 percent did not require it and 23 percent said it was mandatory only in certain tracks. Four percent of the programs did not permit a thesis. Sixty-one percent of the programs allowed reports or projects instead of a thesis and 34 percent allowed courses to be taken instead of a thesis. Statistical analysis showed that there was no significant relationship between the requirement for a thesis and accreditation of the program.

Comprehensive exams were required of all students in 53 percent of the programs; three percent required them in certain tracks only. Where required, comprehensive exams were most often written (51%); they were oral 16 percent of the time, and both oral and written 33 percent of the time. Statistical analysis showed that there was no significant relationship between the requirement for comprehensive exams and accreditation of the program.

When asked if writing skills were formally tested as a part of the graduate program, 29 percent replied that they were, while 61 percent said they were not. Many said that writing skills were evaluated informally

throughout the program. Statistical analysis showed that there was no significant relationship between the formal testing of writing skills and accreditation of the program.

Conclusions

Admissions Requirements

To discover changes and trends in admissions requirements over the past 20 years, it is useful to compare the findings of this study with those of Stempel's 1971 survey of 54 graduate journalism programs' admission criteria, as well as Ryan's 1979 data on 77 graduate journalism programs. Data comparing the three studies with regard to admissions requirements is in Table XVI.

Undergraduate grade point average remained the most frequently required admissions criterion, although percentages requiring it have decreased from 100 percent in 1971, to 97 percent in 1979, to 94 percent in 1991.

The Graduate Record Exam moved up to second most-required admissions criterion (required by 85 percent of the programs) in this study. In 1971, GREs were in fifth place (63%); in 1979 they were in third place (77%). The popularity of GREs as an admissions requirement seems to be increasing steadily.

Letters of recommendation were the third most-required admissions criterion (82%), according to this

TABLE XVI

A COMPARISON OF ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS OF GRADUATE
PROGRAMS FROM STUDIES MADE
IN 1971, 1979, AND 1991

Requirement	% in 1971 (N=54)	% in 1979 (N=77)	% in 1991 (N=102)
Undergraduate Grade Point Average	100	97	94
Graduate Record Exam	63	77	85
Letters of Recommendation	89	78	82
Statement of Goals	45	75	67
Professional Experience	72	1	10
Miller's Analogies Test Scores	15	18	6

study. In 1971 and in 1979, they were the second most-required (89% and 78% respectively). Stempel suggested that few respondents found these letters very useful and this downward trend could be a reflection of this.

A statement of goals was the fourth most-required admissions criterion of this study (67%). In 1971, an "essay by applicant" was in seventh place (required by 45 percent of the programs) and in 1979 a "statement of goals" had moved up to its present fourth place and was required by 75 percent of the programs.

Professional experience was the criterion that showed the most fluctuation between the three studies. In 1971, Stempel found that 72 percent of his programs required professional experience of the applicants. Ryan found in 1979 that only one percent of the programs he examined did. Most recently, this study found that 10 percent of the programs had this as a requirement. It is possible that discrepancies between these studies occurred because of the different populations surveyed. However, this study seems to confirm the definite downward trend in the requirement for professional experience for admissions to these graduate programs. As Ryan commented:

Whether disenchantment with professional experience as an admissions requirement led many journalism faculties to drop it or whether it reflects an increase in the number of

applicants lacking undergraduate journalism backgrounds is a matter of speculation (9).

Graduate Programs

Ryan's 1979 study examined the course requirements and the areas of specialization available in 77 master's programs. Table XVII compares the 1979 and 1991 data on required graduate courses.

TABLE XVII
GRADUATE COURSES REQUIRED: A COMPARISON
OF STUDIES IN 1979 AND 1991

Courses	% in 1979 (N=77)	% in 1991 (N=102)
Research Methods	61	80
Theory of Communications	31	62
Ethics/Law	16	31
Introduction to Communication/ Media and Society	22	23
Newswriting/ Advanced Reporting	21	21
Editing	5	14
Journalism History	9	9
International Communication	5	6
Internship	4	5

Although the figures in table XVII seem to indicate that all percentages rose in the 12 years between the two studies, the percentages of programs requiring Research Methods, Theory of Communications, and Ethics/Law seem to have increased the most. Some of the increase could be a result of the different populations surveyed in the two studies. The earlier study was of journalism programs only, the latter was of journalism and mass communication programs. Mass communication programs may focus on these areas more.

The increase from 16 percent to 31 percent in the requirement of a course in Ethics/Law could also be a result of public pressure on the media for higher ethical standards. In 1990, Meyers wrote, "Evidence continues to build of public dissatisfaction with the media and with the media's conception of ethical journalistic practice... graduate and undergraduate programs have placed an enhanced emphasis on ethics courses" (25).

Editing rose from five to 14 percent as a required graduate course. Possibly, there is an increased need for editing training at the graduate level, in the face of perceived deficiencies in language training at the lower levels.

Table XVIII compares data from Ryan's 1979 study and data from this study with regard to specializations available.

TABLE XVIII

SPECIALIZATIONS AVAILABLE IN GRADUATE PROGRAMS:
A COMPARISON OF STUDIES IN 1979 AND 1991

Specializations	% in 1979 (N=77)	% in 1991 (N=102)
Journalism/ news editorial	55	55
Public relations	40	42
Broadcasting	48	40
Advertising	30	32
Communication research	16	19
Magazine writing/ publishing	16	17
Media management	12	14
International communication	10	13
Photojournalism	13	12
Legal	8	11
General communication	9	10
Environmental/ science writing	8	8
Historical research	5	8
Journalism education	8	4

Journalism/news editorial, public relations, broadcasting and advertising remain the top four specializations available in graduate programs of journalism and mass communication. A comparison of the percentages in the two studies shows that little has changed. What has changed in the intervening years is the relative positions of public relations and broadcasting. Public relations has risen from third to second most frequently available specialization, whereas broadcasting has moved from second down to third place, from 48 to 40 percent.

It is possible that this decrease in the rate for broadcasting is related to the growth of the telecommunications field, and the resulting increase in the number of telecommunication departments at universities. Broadcasting may have joined with telecommunications to form whole new departments, separate from schools of journalism and mass communication.

Graduation Requirements

A comparison of graduation requirements in 1979 and 1991 is in Table XIX. The percentage of programs requiring a thesis has decreased slightly, while the rate for programs that allow projects (and, to a lesser extent, courses) in lieu of a thesis has increased. This would support the view that graduate programs are more

TABLE XIX
 A COMPARISON OF GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
 FOR MASTER'S PROGRAMS
 IN 1979 AND 1991

Requirement	% in 1979 (N=77)	% in 1991 (N=102)
Thesis required	25	23
Thesis not allowed	12	4
Project allowed in lieu of thesis	55	61
Courses allowed in lieu of thesis	32	34
Comprehensive examinations for all students	48	53
Writing abilities formally tested	5	29

diversified now than in the past. More options seem to be available to master's students than before. The fact that there are fewer programs that do not permit theses would also seem to support this view, although some of these differences, again, could be a result of the different populations surveyed.

The percentages of programs with mandatory comprehensive examinations and formal tests of writing abilities for all students have increased. This could be an indication of higher program standards.

Recommendations for Further Research

The findings of this study are valid for the time period (1991) of the study. A similar study at a future date would provide a third point of comparison with Ryan's 1979 study and this one. Similar studies over a period of time are valuable for showing changes and trends in this area of education.

This study indicates that there may be a decrease in the availability of broadcasting as a specialization in master's programs of journalism and mass communication. Broadcasting was offered by 48 percent of the programs in Ryan's 1979 study and by only 40 percent of the programs in 1991. Is broadcasting moving to separate telecommunications departments or are other factors involved?

Although undergraduate education has been the

subject of more frequent research, many areas of investigation remain. Previous studies need to be updated to determine the direction of undergraduate journalism and mass communication education. Has the requirement for courses outside the field remained the same?

Comparisons could be made between undergraduate and graduate programs. For example, what are the similarities and differences between professionally-oriented journalism programs at the two levels?

A previous study by Scotton (1977) suggested that Graduate Record Exam scores and undergraduate grade point averages were not good predictors of success in graduate schools, yet this study shows that they are still required by a majority of the programs. Indeed, the rate of GRE requirement has increased from 63 percent in 1971, to 77 percent in 1979 to 85 percent in 1991. Further research could show whether admissions committees use these scores to predict academic success or to limit the number of students accepted into a program.

Another study could analyze the value of GREs as predictors of academic success in graduate school. Is there a correlation between GRE scores and graduate grade point average? A comparison could then be made between the relative values of GRE scores and undergraduate GPAs as predictors of graduate success (Graduate GPAs).

Writing skills were formally tested in 29 percent of

the programs in this study, whereas only five percent of the programs in Ryan's study had formal testing. Also, the requirement for editing as a graduate course rose almost 150 percent. There appears to be an increased emphasis on the teaching and testing of writing abilities at the graduate level. Further studies could determine why this is so. Are students coming into graduate schools with less developed writing skills than before?

Debate continues over the relative value to students of theoretical tracks versus professional tracks in journalism and mass communication. Although both have their place, it would be useful to prospective students to know which graduates have more success in finding jobs, and the types of jobs they find.

In their 1977 study, Hartnett and Katz showed that many graduate students found themselves in programs that did not suit their goals because they had lacked information about the programs when applying. This study has shown that graduate programs in journalism and mass communication are increasingly diversified as to their goals and methods of carrying out these goals. An easily available, regularly updated, in-depth profile of all the programs would be helpful to counselors and prospective graduate students. Mary Rudolf's 1990 profile of 65 accredited programs provides a good beginning but is not generally accessible to those in need of it.

Concluding Comment

In the past two decades, master's programs in journalism and mass communication have increased in number and diversity. No two programs are the same. Admission, curriculum and graduation requirements are far from standardized, and programs range from broad to highly specialized, from flexible to rigid, and from theoretical to professional.

Neale Copple visited many of the country's programs as president of the AEJMC. In 1985 he wrote:

I discovered all kinds of journalism programs... (and) a considerable range in quality. Perhaps most important, I discovered that the quality programs did not necessarily match one another. I saw programs that were strong in mass media research and strong in the production of research doctorates. I saw programs that were strong professional programs at the master's degree level. And I saw programs that were strong in the production of professionals at the undergraduate level. And I learned a simple truth. Strong does not mean equal. It also does not mean that all strong programs are alike. In fact, the overall strength of journalism education may well be its differences (20).

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY

MASTER'S PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS OF MASS COMMUNICATION

This is a survey of the content and requirements for the master's programs of all schools of mass communications offering such a program in the United States.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed stamped, addressed envelope.

If you have any questions, please contact me at:

Jean Briggs
206 Paul Miller Bldg.
School of Journalism and Broadcasting
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078-0195
405-744-6354

GENERAL

1. Is your program accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC)?
Yes ___ No ___
2. How many students (full and part-time) are currently enrolled in the master's program? ___
3. How many of these are international students? ___
4. What degrees are offered?
MA ___ MS ___ PhD ___ other (please list) _____

ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

1. Which of the following are requirements for admission to the master's program?
 ___ Undergraduate grade point average
 If so, what is the minimum GPA required? ___
 ___ Letters of recommendation

...continued on next page

- GRE scores
 If so, what are the minimum GRE scores required? _____

 Miller's Analogies
 Other tests
 Statement of goals
 Professional experience
 Examples of professional work or of writing
 TOEFL scores for international students
 If so, what minimum TOEFL score is required? _____
 Other: _____
 (please explain)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR MASTER'S PROGRAM

- Which of the following graduate courses are required for a master's degree?
 - Research methods
If so, how many semesters? _____
 - Theory of communications
 - Ethics/law
 - Introduction to communication/media and society
 - Advanced reporting/news writing
 - Editing
 - Journalism history
 - International communication
 - Internship
 - Other: _____
(please list)
- How many graduate credits are required for the master's degree?
 - Required courses _____
 - Electives _____
 - Thesis _____
- How many graduate credits are required outside the Mass Communication area? _____
- Is the master's program a general one or are students required to choose an area of specialization?
 - General program only? Yes _____ No _____
 - Choice of specialization required? Yes _____ No _____
 - Choice of specialization optional? Yes _____ No _____

...continued on next page

5. If students are required to choose an area of specialization, which of the following areas of specialization are available?

Journalism/news editorial
 Broadcasting
 Public relations
 Advertising
 Magazine writing
 Communication research
 Photojournalism
 Media management
 International communication
 General communication
 Environmental/science writing
 Journalism education
 Legal
 Historical research
 Other: _____

(please identify)

6. Are students without an undergraduate background in mass communication accepted into your Master's program?

Yes ___ No ___

7. Are students without an undergraduate background in mass communication required to make up the deficiency?

Yes ___ No ___

If yes, how many credits of deficiency or undergraduate courses do they have to make up? _____

8. How are these deficiencies met?

9. Is graduate credit given for internships?

Yes ___ No ___

10. Is graduate credit given for work experience?

Yes ___ No ___

...continued on next page

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Is a thesis required?
Yes____ No____
2. Is a thesis optional?
Yes____ No____
3. Is a thesis not allowed?
Allowed____ Not allowed____
4. Are reports or projects allowed instead of a thesis?
Yes____ No____
5. Are courses allowed instead of a thesis?
Yes____ No____ (If yes, number of credits:____)
7. Is a comprehensive exam required of all students?
Yes____ No____
8. Is a comprehensive exam required in thesis track only?
Yes____ No____ Only have thesis track____
9. Is the comprehensive exam oral, written or both?
Oral____
Written____
Oral and written____
10. Are writing abilities formally tested during the master's program?
Yes____ No____
If yes, at what point in the program? _____

This completes the questionnaire. Thank you very much for your time. The space below is for any additional comments you might like to make.

APPENDIX B

INITIAL AND FOLLOW-UP COVER LETTERS

November 6, 1991

Dear Graduate Program Coordinator:

Graduate education in mass communication is growing, yet there is a lack of information as to what programs consist of and what requirements are. I am working on a research project which will help fill this void.

I am a graduate student in the School of Journalism and Broadcasting at Oklahoma State University and Charles Fleming, EdD, Assistant Director for Graduate Studies, is my adviser. The research for my thesis focuses on the content and requirements of graduate education at the master's level in the schools of mass communication throughout the United States.

A similar study has been conducted but that was 12 years ago. An update would be useful. The knowledge acquired from the current study will be of value to educators such as yourself who are concerned with graduate education. It is our goal to submit the results for publication to a national journal.

The completeness of this research depends on the information you can provide. I would appreciate, therefore, if you would take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire. A stamped, addressed envelope has been enclosed for your convenience. Please return it by November 30, 1991.

If you have any questions, please call or write me at the address below. Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Jean E. Briggs
Graduate student in mass communication

206 Paul Miller Bldg.
School of Journalism and Broadcasting
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078-0195
405-744-6354

1 December 1991

Dear Graduate Program Coordinator,

A few weeks ago I mailed you a letter and questionnaire concerning the graduate program in journalism and mass communication at your educational institution.

As I have not received a completed questionnaire from you, I am concerned that perhaps my first packet did not reach you. I am therefore enclosing another questionnaire and return envelope.

I realize how busy you must be. I hope you will take just a few moments to complete and return this survey. The accuracy and completeness of my study depend on you.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

P.S. If you have already returned the questionnaire, I would like to thank you again for your time.

APPENDIX C
GRADUATE PROGRAMS REPRESENTED
IN THIS STUDY

102 GRADUATE PROGRAMS REPRESENTED

IN THIS STUDY

University of Alabama
University of South Alabama
University of Arizona
Arizona State University
University of Arkansas
University of Arkansas at Little Rock
Arkansas State University
University of California at Berkeley
California State University, Fresno
California State University, Fullerton
California State University, Northridge
University of the Pacific
San Francisco State University
San Jose State University
Stanford University
University of Colorado
Colorado State University
University of Denver
University of Northern Colorado
The American University
University of Florida
Florida International University
University of Miami
University of South Florida
University of West Florida
University of Georgia
Georgia State University
University of Illinois
Northern Illinois University
Northwestern University
Southern Illinois University
Indiana University
Purdue University
Drake University
University of Iowa
Iowa State University
University of Kansas
Kansas State University
Wichita State University
Murray State University
Louisiana State University
Loyola University

Northeast Louisiana University
University of Southwestern Louisiana
University of Maryland
Boston University
Emerson College
Northeastern University
Grand Valley State University
University of Michigan
Michigan State University
University of Minnesota
St. Cloud State University
University of Mississippi
University of Southern Mississippi
Central Missouri State University
University of Missouri
University of Montana
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
University of Nebraska at Omaha
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
University of Nevada-Reno
Columbia University
Iona College
New York University
Syracuse University
University of North Carolina
University of North Dakota
Bowling Green State University
Kent State University
Ohio State University
Ohio University
Central State University
University of Oklahoma
Oklahoma State University
University of Oregon
Duquesne University
The Pennsylvania State University
Point Park College
Temple University
University of South Carolina
University of South Dakota
South Dakota State University
Memphis State University
University of Tennessee
Abilene Christian University
Baylor University
East Texas State University
University of North Texas
University of Texas at Austin
Texas Christian University
Texas Tech University
Brigham Young University
University of Utah
Utah State University

Virginia Commonwealth University
University of Washington
Washington State University
Marshall University
West Virginia University
Marquette University
University of Wisconsin -- Madison

VITA^l

Jean Ellen Briggs

Candidate for the Degree of
Master of Science

Thesis: A SURVEY OF 102 MASTER'S PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS OF
JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION: ADMISSION AND
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROGRAM STRUCTURE
AND CONTENT

Major Field: Mass Communication

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Washington D.C., the
daughter of Yvonne A. and David G. Briggs.
Grew up in Asia, Europe and the Middle East
(father in Diplomatic Corps). Worked 19 years
as international flight attendant for Pan
American World Airways. Married to Alastair
Watson.

Education: Graduated from Brent School, Baguio, The
Philippines, in May 1966; received Bachelor of
Arts Degree in History and Public Affairs from
Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida, in May
1970; completed requirements for the Master of
Science degree at Oklahoma State University in
July 1992.

Professional Experience: Contributing writer and
make-up person, The Daily O'Collegian, Oklahoma
State University, 1990-1992; French translator,
book and scientific articles; member of Kappa
Tau Alpha National Journalism Scholarship
Society.