

“Taking Care of Business”: A Study of Administrators at ACEJMC-accredited Journalism Programs

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MANY faculty who teach in ACEJMC-accredited journalism programs are not necessarily aware of the educational and professional background of their directors, assistant directors, chairs, or heads, unless faculty served on the hiring committees and had direct access to these administrators' resumes. Yet, faculty should be interested in the backgrounds of these individuals because these individuals are asked by deans and vice presidents to evaluate (judge) faculty.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The authors of this study presumed that such information had been reported in one or more studies, especially those that had been sponsored in full or in part by the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication or by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. However, most studies have focused exclusively on faculty. The few studies that have focused on administrators have failed to provide a comprehensive picture about directors, assistant directors, chairs, or heads of ACEJMC-accredited journalism programs.

For instance, the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication (September 1998) reported faculty and administrator salaries based on age, gender, ethnicity, highest degree, rank, tenure status, major field of interest, years teaching experience, years professional experience, region, accreditation status, and size of academic unit. The study's emphasis was salaries, not demographic, professional, and educational information.

Alexis Tan (spring 1991) discussed administrators' perceptions of journalism and mass communication programs in the United States. Tan presented only the following demographic information about the respondents to his survey: gender, highest degree, and administrative position. He did not discuss other demographic, professional, and educational information.

Elnora W. Stuart and Elizabeth B. Dickey (summer 1991) reported the average salaries of faculty and administrators. They also reported the average salaries by number of years teaching and non-teaching experience by rank, by highest degree earned, by discipline, by geographic region, and by gender, among other criteria. Stuart and Dickey did not provide demographic, professional, and educational information about administrators, however.

Three additional studies reported information about faculty, not administrators. For instance, David Riffe, Kandice Salomone, and Guido H. Stempel III (January 1999) presented demographic information about members of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. Some of the demographic information included gender, ethnicity, and teaching area; rank by gender and ethnicity; salary by rank, years teaching, and gender; convention papers by rank, gender, and years teaching; journal articles by rank, gender, and years teaching; years of professional experience by gender and ethnicity; among other information.

Fred Fedler, Tim Counts, Arlen Carey, and Maria Cristina Santana (spring 1998) discussed faculty's degrees, years of professional experience, and productivity in the form of research.

C. A. Tuggle and Don Sneed (spring 1998) discussed the teaching and/or professional experience of faculty. In addition, they discussed the significance of the doctorate and professional experience of faculty to teaching, research, and service.

Taken together, these studies identify variables that are important to any study of administrators' qualifications, such as age, professional experience, educational experience, and degrees, etc., yet none of the studies provide a complete picture of administrators.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to provide demographic, professional, and educational information about directors, assistant directors, chairs, and heads of ACEJMC-accredited journalism programs, in an effort to provide a complete profile of these individuals. A second purpose is to cast some light on the individuals who are often required to evaluate faculty in their respective schools or departments. This information should be useful as a description of the current status and as a benchmark against which to compare the results of future studies. This study was guided by the following research questions:

How many years has the administrator served in her/his current position?

What is the administrator's gender and ethnicity?

What is the administrator's academic rank?

How many years has the administrator served in all administrative positions?

What undergraduate and graduate degrees does the administrator have?

How many years has the administrator worked full time in professional media?

How many years has the administrator worked full time in higher education?

Has the administrator's research productivity been impacted by her/his current position?

What is the size (faculty and students) of the administrator's academic unit?

What is the size of the administrator's university?

METHOD

In the fall of 1999, the authors mailed a one-page questionnaire to 95 directors, assistant directors, chairs, and heads of 89 ACEJMC-accredited journalism programs. The names of the programs and administrators were determined by examining several sources, including the publications, *Journalism and Mass Communication Accreditation: 1999-2000* and the *Journalism & Mass Communication Directory: 1999-2000*. The authors enclosed a self-addressed, stamped envelope with each coded questionnaire for the respondent's convenience.

The questionnaire asked for the title of each respondent's current administrative position, the names of each respondent's academic unit, and the number of years each respondent had worked in the current administrative position. Additional questions concerned administrative, media, and higher education experience; gender; ethnicity; academic rank; undergraduate and graduate degrees earned; research productivity; and number of majors, faculty, and students who graduate annually in the respondent's unit; as well as the full time enrollment at the respondent's college or university.

RESULTS

Of the 95 directors, associate directors, assistant directors, chairs, and heads at the 89 ACEJMC-accredited journalism programs who were mailed questionnaires, 68 (71.6%) returned them. These respondents represented 66 (74.1%) of the 89 programs. Of the 68 who responded, most were chairs or heads of departments (see Table 1). Indeed, there were more than twice as many chairs and heads of accredited departments as directors of accredited schools.

Table 1
Current Administrative Position

Title	Number	Percent
Director	13	19.1%
Associate/Assistant Director	4	5.9%
Chair/Head	51	75.0%

Sixty-one (89.7%) of the 68 respondents had served in their current administrative positions less than 10 years, while 50 (81.9%) of these 61 had served less than five years. Five (7.4%) had served from 10 to 15 years. Only two (3%) had served more than 15 years.

Males occupied these positions more than two to one. Indeed, 49 (72.1%) of the 68 respondents were male, while 19 (27.9%) were female. Most were Caucasian; only a few were African American. One was an Asian American. The majority (38, or 55.9%) of the 68 respondents were full professors, while 27 (39.7%) were associate professors. Only three (4.4%) were assistant professors (see Table 2).

Table 2
Ethnicity and Academic Rank of Respondents

Ethnicity	Number	Rank	Number
Caucasian	56	Professor	38
African American	5	Associate Professor	27
Asian American	1	Assistant Professor	3
Did Not Respond	6	Instructor	0

The majority of the respondents had the B.A. degree. Thirty-three (48.5%) of the respondents had majored in an area of communications at the undergraduate level, while 35 (51.5%) had not. Seven (10.3%) had a minor in an area of communications, while 31 (45.6%) had not. Thirty (44.1%) did not respond to the question. The majority of the respondents had earned the M. A. degree.

Most of the respondents had earned the Ph.D. degree. Fifteen (22.1%) did not respond because they indicated that their highest degree was the master's (see Table 3).

Table 3
Degrees of Respondents

Degrees	Undergraduate		Graduate		
	No./Respondents	Degrees	No./Respondents	Degrees	
B.A.	43*	M.A.	43*	Ph.D.	42*
B.S.	19*	M.S.	21*	Ed.D.	7*
B.J.	6*	M.S. J.	3*	M.D.	1
B.B.A.	1	M.J.	2	J.D.	3*
No Response	1	M.B.A.	2*	Ed.S.	2
		Other	4*	No Response	15

* Two respondents had more than one bachelor's degree. Seven had more than one master's degree. Two who had the doctorate also had the J. D. degree.

As mentioned, 15 (22.1%) of the respondents indicated that their highest degree was the master's. Of these, eight had the M.A. degree, five had the M.S. degree, one had the M.B.A. degree, and one had the M.Ed. degree. Three of the respondents whose highest degree was the master's had earned their degree at the University of Missouri, in Columbia (see Table 4).

Table 4
Directors, Assistant Directors, Chairs, and Heads
With a Master's Degree as their Highest Degree

Degree	University	Major	Position
M.A.	U. of Missouri	Journalism	Director
M.A.	Michigan State	Journalism	Assistant Director
M.A.	U. of Missouri	Journalism	Chair
M.A.	U. of Missouri	Journalism	Chair
M.A.	Florida Atlantic U.	Communication	Chair

M.A.	Fairfield U.	Mass Communication	Chair
M.A.	Boston U.	American Government	Head
M.A.	L.S.U.	Journalism	Head
M.S.	U. of Kansas	Journalism	Director
M.S.	U. of Iowa	Journalism	Chair
M.S.	U. of Pennsylvania	English	Chair
M.S.	U. of Illinois	Journalism	Chair
M.S.	Iowa State	Journalism	Head
M.Ed.	Xavier U.	Communication Arts	Director
M.B.A.	Penn. State	Business Administration	Assistant Director

Forty-three (63.2%) of the respondents indicated that the major of their highest degree was in an area of communications, while 25 (36.8%) indicated that it was outside of communications. Seven (10.3%) of the respondents indicated that their minor of their highest degree was in an area of communications, while 14 (20.6%) indicated that it was outside of communications. However, 47 (69.1%) did not respond to the question.

Three of the 15 respondents whose highest degree was the master's served as directors of schools, two served as assistant directors of schools, 10 served as chairs or heads of departments. Those serving as directors had been in their positions at least five years. The two serving as assistant directors had been in their positions two years and two months, respectively. Those serving as chairs or heads had less than five years to 18 years experience. The three directors had a minimum of 11 years of professional media experience, while the two assistant directors had less than five years of professional media experience. The professional media experience of the 10 chairs or heads ranged from six to 25 years, with only one having less than five years. The three directors had from 11 to more than 30 years of educational administrative experience, while the two assistant directors had a minimum of six years. All except one of the chairs or heads had at least six years of educational administrative experience, with only one having less than five years. Three had from 16 to more than 30 years of educational administrative experience (see Table 5).

Table 5

Years in Current Position and Years of Professional Media and Higher Education Experience of Directors, Assistant Directors, Chairs, and Heads with a Master's Degree as Their Highest Degree

Years of Experience	Current Position	Number of Respondents	
		Professional Media Experience	Higher Education Experience
0-5	9	2	1
6-10	4	3	2
11-15	1	3	3
16-20	1	3	3
21-25	0	2	4
26-30	0	2	0
30+	0	0	2

Two of the 53 respondents had a specialist degree and were chairs of departments. Seven had the Ed.D. degree. Five of these served as chairs of departments, while

one served as an interim director of a school and one served as an associate director of a school.

Two of the respondents who had the Ed.D. had earned the degree at Texas A.&M. University, while two had earned the degree at the University of Tennessee. One of the respondents had a M.D. from Johns Hopkins University and served as an interim head of a department (see Table 6).

Table 6
Administrators with the Ed.S., Ed.D., M.D., or J.D.

Degree	University	Major	Position
Ed.S.	Kansas State U.	Ed. Admin.	Chair
Ed.S.	Ball State U.	Curriculum	Chair
Ed.D.	Arizona State U.	Ed. Admin.	Int. Dir.
Ed.D.	Texas A&M U.	Ed. Tech.	Assoc. Dir.
Ed.D.	Texas A&M U.	Journalism	Chair
Ed.D.	U. of Tennessee	Higher Ed.	Chair
Ed.D.	Boston U.	Human Res.	Chair
Ed.D./J.D.	U. of W. Virginia	Ed. Admin./Law	Chair
Ed.D.	U. of Tennessee	Higher Ed.	Chair
M.D.	Johns Hopkins U.	Medicine	Int. Head
J.D.	Lincoln U.	Law	Director

Seven of the respondents with the Ed.S., Ed.D., M.D., or J.D. degree had been in their current administrative position less than five years, while four had been in their current administrative position less than 10. Seven of the respondents had less than 10 years of professional media experience, while four had between 11 and 25 years. Seven of the respondents had been in higher education between 16 and 25 years, while one had been in higher education more than 30 years (see Table 7).

Table 7
Years in Current Position and Years of Professional Media and Higher Education Experience of Directors, Assistant Directors, Chairs, and Heads with the Ed.S., Ed.D., M.D., or J.D. degree

Years of Experience	Current Position	Number of Respondents	
		Professional Media Experience	Higher Education Experience
0-5	7	4	1
6-10	4	3	1
11-15	0	1	0
16-20	0	2	4
21-25	0	1	3
26-30	0	0	1
30+	0	0	1

Forty-two (79.2%) of the 53 respondents had the Ph.D. degree. Twenty-nine of these respondents served as chairs or heads of departments, two served as acting chairs of departments, seven served as directors of schools, one served as an acting director of a school, one served as an assistant director of a school, one served as a chair of a school, while one served as a director of a program. Four of the respondents had earned their Ph.D. at the University of Iowa. Three of the respondents had earned their Ph.D. at the Ohio State University, while three had earned the Ph.D. at the University of Minnesota, three at the University of Texas at Austin, and three at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Two of the respondents had earned their Ph.D. at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, while two had earned the degree at the University of North Texas. One respondent did not identify the university that granted his/her degree (see Table 8).

Table 8

Administrators with the Ph.D.

Degree	University	Major	Postion
Ph.D.	Ohio State U.	Sociology	Director
Ph.D.	Northwestern U.	R/TV/Film	Director
Ph.D.	U. of Illinois	Communications	Director
Ph.D.	U. of Washington	English	Director
Ph.D.	U. of Wisconsin	Mass Communication	Director
Ph.D.	U. of North Texas	Political Science	Director
Ph.D.	-----	Communications	Director
Ph.D.	U. of Iowa	Mass Communications	Director
Ph.D.	U. of Texas-Austin	Journalism	Acting Director
Ph.D.	Indiana U.	Mass Communications	Assistant Director
Ph.D.	U. of Texas-Austin	American Civilizations	Chair
Ph.D./	S.I.U.-Carbondale	Journalism/	
J.D.	U. of Tenn.	Law	Chair
Ph.D.	Ohio U.	Mass Communication	Chair
Ph.D.	Texas A&M U.	Ed. Administration	Chair
Ph.D.	U.C.L.A.	High. Ed. Ad.	Chair
Ph.D.	U. of Wisconsin	Mass Communication	Chair
Ph.D.	U. of Alabama	Mass Communication	Chair
Ph.D.	U. of North Texas	Education	Chair
Ph.D.	U. of Wisconsin	Mass Communication	Chair
Ph.D.	U. of Oklahoma	Higher Ed. Administration	Chair
Ph.D.	U. of Maryland	Education	Chair
Ph.D.	S.I.U.-Carbondale	Journalism	Chair
Ph.D.	U. of Florida	Speech	Chair
Ph.D.	U. of Missouri	Journalism	Chair
Ph.D.	American U.	International Relations	Chair
Ph.D.	Temple U.	Speech	Chair
Ph.D.	Ohio State U.	Ed. Communication	Chair
Ph.D.	U. of Texas-Austin	Journalism	Chair
Ph.D.	U. of Iowa	Speech	Chair
Ph.D.	U. of Minnesota	Mass Communications	Chair
Ph.D.	Ohio State U.	Speech	Chair
Ph.D.	U. of Iowa	Marketing	Chair

Ph.D.	U. of Iowa	American Studies	Chair
Ph.D.	U. of Massachusetts	Rhetoric	Acting Chair
Ph.D.	U. of Colorado	Comm.	Acting Chair
Ph.D.	U. of Minnesota	Mass Communication	Head
Ph.D.	U. of Mississippi	Ed. Administration	Head
Ph.D.	U. of Minnesota	Mass Communication	Head
Ph.D.	L. S. U.	Communications	Head
Ph.D.	U. of Penn.	Communications	Head
Ph.D.	U. of Southern Miss.	Communications	Head
Ph.D.	U. of W. Ontario	-----	Head

Thirty-four of the respondents with the Ph.D. had been in their current position less than five years. Thirty-three of the respondents had less than 10 years of professional media experience. However, all but five had been in higher education between 11 and more than 30 years (see Table 9).

Table 9

Years in Current Position and Years of Professional Media and Higher Education Experience of Directors, Assistant Directors, Chairs, and Heads with the Ph.D.

Years of Experience	Current Position	Number of Respondents	
		Professional Media Experience	Higher Education Experience
0-5	34	21	0
6-10	3	11	5
11-15	4	5	11
16-20	0	4	7
21-25	1	1	9
26-30	0	0	5
30+	0	0	5

Research productivity decreased for 45 (66.2%) of the 68 respondents since they had assumed administrative duties. Eighteen (26.5%) indicated that research productivity had stayed about the same. Only three (4.4%) respondents reported that their research productivity had increased after becoming administrators.

Those respondents whose highest degree was the master's or the Ed. S. were in administrative positions in programs that varied in size, from under 100 to 1,000 majors and from under 10 to 50 faculty members. The number of students who graduated annually from these programs ranged from fewer than 25 to more than 100, and the programs were housed in institutions that had overall enrollments from 1,650 to 35,000.

Those respondents whose highest degree was the doctorate were in administrative positions in programs that varied in size, from under 100 to more than 1,000 majors and from under 10 to 30 faculty members. One failed to respond to the question. The number of students who graduated annually from these programs ranged from fewer than 25 to more than 100, and the programs were housed in institutions that had overall enrollments from 5,000 to 44,000.

Regarding programs, the most frequent category for number of majors was the 201-400 group with 29, followed by the 101-200 category with 13, and the 401-700 cat-

egory with 12. Three respondents had less than 100 majors, while three had more than 1,000 majors.

Only one program had more than 30 faculty members, while 29 had 11 to 20. Twenty-five had fewer than 10, while 12 had 21 to 30.

Considering the numbers of yearly graduates, 32 programs (49%) graduated between 26 and 75 students annually, 20 schools (44.1%) graduated more than 76 students per year, while only six programs (8.8%) graduated fewer than 25 students annually.

Most programs were located in universities with enrollments between 5,001 and 15,000 (28, or 41.2%), followed by universities with enrollments in excess of 20,000 (27, or 39.7%). Ten universities (14.7%) were in the 15,001-20,000 category and two universities (2.9%) reported fewer than 5,000 students. One did not respond to the question (see Tables 10 and 11).

Table 10

Number of Majors and Students Who Graduate

Majors			Graduates		
No./ Majors	No./ Programs	Percent	No./ Students	No./ Programs	Percent
1-100	3	4.4%	1-25	6	8.8%
101-200	13	19.1%	26-50	16	23.5%
201-400	29	42.6%	51-75	16	23.5%
401-700	12	17.6%	76-100	14	20.6%
701-1,000	8	11.8%	100 plus	16	23.5%
1,000 plus	3	4.4%			

Table 11

Number of Faculty and Full Time Enrollment

Faculty			Enrollment		
No./ Faculty	No./ Programs	Percent	No./ Students	No./ Programs	Percent
1-10	25	36.8%	1-5,000	2	2.9%
11-20	29	42.6%	5,001-10,000	15	22.1%
21-30	12	17.6%	10,001-15,000	13	19.1%
31-40	0	0%	15,001-20,000	10	14.7%
41-50	1	1.5%	20,001-25,000	9	13.2%
50 plus	0	0%	25,000 plus	18	26.5%
No Response	1	1.5%	No Response	1	1.5%

DISCUSSION:

The directors, assistant directors, chairs, and heads of ACEJMC-accredited programs are overwhelmingly white, male, and senior faculty. Their undergraduate degree is

a B.A. degree in an area of communications. Their graduate degrees consist of a M.A. and a Ph.D.. The field of study for their highest degree is in an area of communications. Most of these administrators have held their positions less than five years. Research productivity has dropped presumably because of their duties for two-thirds of these administrators.

The Ph.D. is the most common final degree; however, 15 of the 68 respondents have a master's degree as their highest degree. This group tends to have significant amounts of higher education experience and substantial professional media experience. Only three of the 15 have less than 10 years experience in higher education, with six having more than 20 years' experience. Only two of the 15 have less than five years professional media experience, but nine of the 15 have between six and 20 years' experience.

A traditional doctorate (42 Ph.D.'s and seven Ed.D.'s) is held by 72% of the respondents. No more than four administrators earned their terminal degree at the same university. These administrators tend to have much more higher education experience than professional media experience. Of those having doctorates, 42 have more than 10 years' experience in higher education and only one has five years or less. As for professional experience, 36 have less than 10 years' professional media experience and 22 have less than five years.

The majority of the programs are not in the largest or smallest of universities. Most of the programs seem to be in mid-sized universities (5,001-15,000). Most of the programs have numbers of faculty members in the mid-range (11-20). The number of majors for most programs is in the mid-range, with 29 having 201-400 majors. Thirty-two programs graduate 26 to 75 students annually.

An additive index measuring program size was created by combining three variables: the number of majors, the number of faculty, and the annual number of graduates. The index yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .88. However, the program size index was found to be uncorrelated with the respondents' educational administrative experience, professional media experience, or number of years in full-time higher education (r -squared = .00 for all three relationships). Strong relationships were apparent, however, between respondents' number of years in higher education and their number of years in administrative positions (r -squared = .28) and between their professional experience and higher education experience (r -squared = .12). The latter relationship was negative.

The profile of the backgrounds of the directors, assistant directors, chairs, and heads of journalism at ACEJMC-accredited programs is much clearer now thanks to the cooperation of these administrators in completing this survey. This information should prove very useful to faculty members who desire to know more about the administrators who evaluate them. Furthermore, this information may be valuable to search committees as a base comparison for the credentials of the applicants. It may also prove useful for those who aspire to join the ranks of administration to see if their preparation is on par with administrators of programs nationwide.

The results of this survey should benefit the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC).

REFERENCES AND NOTES

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Directors, assistant directors, chairs, and heads of 89 ACEJMC-accredited journalism programs were surveyed in the fall of 1999. More than 71% of those surveyed representing more than 74% of the programs returned the questionnaire.

The typical director, assistant director, chair, and head is a white male, full professor with the Ph.D. degree, heading an administrative unit that has between 200 and 400 undergraduate majors and fewer than 20 faculty members. Fifteen (22.1%) of the respondents had the master's degree as their highest degree; they had a substantial amount of experience in professional media and higher education.

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