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THE VALUE OF A JOURNALISM DEGREE: AN ANALYSIS OF WHAT NEWSPAPER EDITORS CONSIDER WHEN HIRING JOURNALISM SCHOOL GRADUATES AND WHAT JOURNALISM SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS CONSIDER WHEN EDUCATING THESE GRADUATES

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A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
GAYLORD COLLEGE OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION

BY

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Dedicated to Prof. Sharon Harl, University of Missouri; Prof. Samuel G. Freedman and in memory of Prof. James Carey, Columbia University

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Abstract

Journalism schools have seen their enrollment numbers ebb and flow for decades though never more so than in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. After the Internet became a serious mode of news delivery, the face of journalism and mass communication changed forever. Perhaps nowhere else have the repercussions of the Internet revolution been more evident than in the still-evolving 21st century legacy newspaper newsroom. The legacy newspaper industry, long populated by journalism school graduates who were promoted through the ranks from reporter-to-editor, saw shifting demands and requirements that affected their need for new hires in terms of both numbers and desired qualifications as circulation numbers and net revenue shifted. While newsrooms continue to shrink, both experienced and newly acquired personnel are required to fill in the gaps to produce sufficient digital and printed copy while management wrestles with the role of the legacy newspaper in the 21st century digital age. Similarly, journalism schools continue to adapt their curricula and implement program changes of their own to stay current and viable in a time populated by readers who are now accustomed to the term "fake news." The journalism academic administrators tasked with the charge of creating and maintaining conversant curricula must stay ahead of industry trends and ensure that what is being taught is both fresh and appropriate to the demands of the media world.

This study analyzes and interprets the information obtained from in-depth interviews of legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism academic administrators

in order to identify the intersection of industry wants and institutional pedagogy. This research also explores the existing relationship between the two groups. The results point to an intersection of industry wants and academy teachings, and they also highlight a real and perceived disconnect between hiring editors and journalism academic administrators.

Keywords: academic administration, education, journalism, journalism school graduates, media management, newspapers

Chapter 1: Introduction

Given the curious predicament legacy newspapers have found themselves in since the Internet became a mainstream mode of communication at the turn of the 21st century, the editors tasked with hiring recent journalism school graduates have found themselves in the dilemma of having to change their view of what was typically/traditionally required for new employees straight out of college. Those editors then had to adjust those requirements given the dawn of the Internet. Legacy newspaper hiring editors found themselves in a position where they needed new hires who could, among other skills and criteria of their candidates, boost the newspaper's print and digital presence while maintaining credibility and readability standards (Giles, 2007; Kuban, 2014). Along the same lines, a change needed to happen in journalism schools, too. Journalism school administrators and key faculty had to implement and emphasize curriculum changes over the last two decades to indicate to current and prospective students, as well as to industry practitioners and pundits, that they were aware of the shift from print to digital newspaper consumption. As a result, many schools ended up "blowing up the curriculum" (Claussen, 2009, p. 133). These moves facilitated that journalism school administrators believe they have their collective fingers on the pulse of the industry's ever-changing digital and social media needs, and they are preparing their students accordingly (Newton, Bell, Ross, Philipps, Shoemaker, & Haas, 2012). According to the principles of the well-heeled Knight, McCormick, Ethics and

Excellence in Journalism, Scripps Howard, Brett Family, and Wyncote Foundations, journalism schools that do not update their curriculum and faculties to reflect media nuance in the digital age will find it difficult to raise money from foundations interested in the future of news (Newton et al., 2012).

But does that mean that in 2019 and for the foreseeable future, industry and academia have struck the perfect balance in terms of the curriculum taught in relation to newsroom needs? Additionally, is there a conversation between legacy newspaper hiring editors[1] and journalism school academic administrators? Are the legacy newspaper hiring editors explaining the various skills and features they would like to see journalism schools impart to the future workforce?

On the other hand, are journalism school administrators soliciting feedback regarding the performance of their new-hires? On a more basic level, are these same administrators requesting a wish-list of courses that the legacy newspaper hiring editors would like to see taught? Are the two groups that are the respective guardians of their fields even having the conversations with their counterparts to ensure that the vitality and integrity of the profession are championed by recent journalism school graduates? Will there be a legacy newspaper newsroom for these graduates in five years? In 10 years? At the same time, both groups have stamped into their DNA a desire to keep an eye on one of the central tenets of American journalism, which is keeping the American public aware of current events so that they can be informed voters and aware citizens.

[1] The term "legacy newspaper hiring editor" or "hiring editor" is used in this dissertation as a broad term to indicate those who are responsible for hiring recent journalism school graduates. A more thorough explanation will occur in the "Methodology" section.

This is an important point to keep in mind throughout the research in order to avoid focusing solely on the profession's and the academy's financial and survival motives.

The newspaper industry, defined in this research as traditional legacy daily newspapers' print and online products, and academic institutions, defined in this research as American journalism schools or journalism areas of concentration that are part of four-year colleges or universities, continue to evolve. This research seeks to determine what the middle ground is between the most suitable skills taught in student curriculum and the skills needed by newspaper hiring editors of their employees. Learning soft-skill instruction about theory, law, critical issues, ethics, and other intellectual pursuits are distinguishing characteristics of a journalism school's curriculum (Wenger, 2009). This study also questions whether a hard skill set is needed or required in the legacy newspaper field, including writing and reporting skills for print and online, coding, data scrubbing and analysis, and design skills, as well as any other skills, hard or soft, that the interviewees organically raise.

All the while, students are confronted with the dilemma of what pathway of study to take while enrolled in journalism school that will make them attractive hires upon graduation (Cullen, 2014). In essence, what qualities are legacy newspaper hiring editors looking for in recent journalism school graduates? What qualities and skill sets are journalism programs instilling in their students? Furthermore, what qualities and skill sets have recent graduates/new hires acquired in college that make them both knowledgeable *and* marketable to the newspapers that hired them for their first job?

While these questions have been topics of significant discussion over the last two decades[2], there is still no concrete guideline or conclusion regarding the newspaper industry's needs. Nor is there a guideline of how to have those needs addressed and taught in journalism/mass communication/communication/media programs and departments in the United States. (Since some journalism programs that will be studied are either housed in or live alongside mass communication, communication, or media programs, for the purposes of this research, the various departments will be used interchangeably or referred to collectively as "journalism" departments.) This research helps to identify criteria and parameters of industry needs and academic teachings based on qualitative responses from the actors in the two fields, journalism newspaper industry and journalism education.

Finally, this research will identify the journalism programs that industry peers believe are educating students in a manner that they deem correct and necessary for their hiring needs.

Purpose/Problem and Significance

Given the issues discussed in the introduction, the purpose of this study is to examine (1) what qualities a legacy newspaper's hiring editor looks for in a recent journalism school graduate and (2) what education and instruction journalism school administrators believe they need to give their students. By looking at these two sectors,

[2] These questions have been debated longer than the last 20 years, but according to Cullen (2014), the conversation has been stepped up since 2000 when the Internet became the Internet of everything.

the researcher argues that journalism education will be improved by a better alignment between the characteristics that newspapers seek in their new hires and the goals of journalism school curricula. Existing literature shows a suspected disconnect between these two entities (e.g. Grubenmann & Meckel, 2017). This study aims to assess whether such a disconnect exists between legacy newspaper hiring editors and academic journalism administrator, and if so, to address the various points of contention between the two.

This study analyzes and interprets data obtained from interviewees in both camps. In-depth interviews have been conducted to collect data in order to identify the intersection of industry wants and institutional needs. Through this research, the intent was to collect qualitative data from newspaper hiring editors to see what skills, education, and training they want when interviewing and hiring recent journalism school graduates as well as why they expect these specific skills. Additionally, throughout the course of the gathering of data, this dissertation includes a collection of qualitative data from journalism educators and administrators (the people who are designing and teaching journalism curricula) in order to see what they believe are the strongest curricula through which to prepare journalism students for their professional careers. This research also demonstrates why journalism school educators and administrators have designed their curricula in the manner they have.

The legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism academic administrators, as will be expanded upon in the "Methodology" section, were carefully chosen and vetted,

and they were asked about their particular roles in hiring recent journalism school graduates and shaping curriculum, respectively.

Chapter 2: Changes in the media industry and the effect on legacy newspapers, a literature review

To understand the current state of the legacy newspaper's newsroom and what that composition looks like, one must first understand how the newspaper industry has been changing over the last 20 years, and how it is changing still. The benchmark of 20 years was chosen because it sets the dial right in the midst of when Internet connectedness was becoming widespread and common, and when newspapers began putting the content of their printed papers online (Isaacson, 2009). Twenty years ago, as is still the case, questions arose around the following: Why are these changes happening to the legacy newspaper industry? What is the impact of these changes on the everyday reality of working in the legacy newspaper industry? What does that mean in terms of hiring new people, especially recent journalism school graduates who do not have much (if any) real-world journalism experience, into the legacy newspaper industry?

Answers to these questions can be found in the following overview of the industry. Moreover, answers to these questions are brought into clear focus when one analyzes the changes that have occurred in the hiring process, as well as the results of those changes as they pertain to hiring fresh-out-of-college personnel (in this case, fresh out of journalism school).

The Internet age

The Internet, and to a large degree social media, has done more to restructure both the delivery mechanisms of news and reader usability over the last 20 years than any other medium introduced into journalism since the television set (Grubenmann & Meckel, 2017). While the introduction of the Internet and the public's gradual dependence on it for news has rocked the legacy newspaper industry, research exists that illustrates a rift among journalists, even journalists in the same newsroom, regarding the direction for and pace of newsroom change (Grubenmann & Meckel, 2017). Grubenmann and Meckel (2017) conducted 26 interviews in a Swiss newsroom, and examined journalists' sense-making of developments in their work environments. Through their qualitative study, two groups of journalists emerged. One group identified themselves as slow to change with the industry because of a perceived traditionalist role of their place in the media (Grubenmann & Meckel, 2017). Another identified as being more service-oriented and solutions-oriented (Grubenmann & Meckel, 2017). This set of journalists identified as engaging in creating the new adaptation of the journalist's role in the 21st century Internet-driven newsroom (Grubenmann & Meckel, 2017). Tellingly, the rift was sizeable and all but impossible to reconcile with legacy staff based on the comments by the journalists.

Another study, this one out of New Zealand, explored the impact of social media on journalism education within the context of the changes in journalism that are being driven by social media use (Cochrane, Sissons, Mulrennan, & Pamatatau, 2013). The study concluded that a framework for a response to social media within journalism

education was emerging and that there was a positive impact both in the classroom and in the industry when integrating the use of mobile social media student engagement, collaboration, and contextualizing theory with authentic learning environments (Cochrane et al., 2013).

These two international studies indicated that there was a definite shift in the industry (and ultimately in the classroom) regarding Internet connectedness, social media engagement, and student collaboration (Cochrane et al., 2013; Grubenmann & Meckel, 2017). However, there is still a widespread perception that the industry is in a state of emergency, and that academia is not responding in time (Cochrane et al., 2013; Grubenmann & Meckel, 2017; Wenger, Owens, & Cain, 2018). "The Internet has transformed the news industry: its ability to make money, the means it uses to distribute its product and the way news workers practice their trade. The rise of social media sites has even affected the nature of journalistic identity, altering how journalists are viewed and how they view themselves" (Cochrane et al., 2013, p. 20).

The last two decades have demonstrated that modern technology and traditional legacy newspapers have not always moved together at the same speed (Adams, 2008; Wenger, Owens, & Cain, 2018). The newspaper industry has fully recognized technology and the need to embrace it, but that desire to completely embrace technology and not wait and see whether the Internet and Internet news readership would die out was mostly a recent development (slow from 1999-2009, then ramped up in 2009-current) rather than a perpetual operations overhaul over 20 years, as what was experienced in academia (Hanitzsch & Vos, 2017; Hanusch, 2017). That is in part

because the industry did not see a need to change. Part of the reason journalistic roles in a newspaper newsroom are slow to change is because historically, newspaper journalists themselves set the parameters of what is appropriate or acceptable, both in terms of setting the agenda and in terms of the delivery mechanism (Hanitzsch & Vos, 2017). But the Internet served as a leveler, as it were, because no longer were traditional journalists the only ones disseminating or purporting to produce the news (Hanusch, 2017). The Internet gave anybody with a blog and an Internet connection a platform. It also gave other media like radio and television a chance to communicate to viewers and listeners with the written word, which thereby put them in the same space as newspapers. Over time, various software programs made it even easier for purveyors of content to reach a mass audience, and they no longer needed to have technical abilities to post their musings. As a result, industry pundits and scholars have had to reassess who has both the right and the authority to propagate and promulgate the news to the people (Hanusch, 2017). This is a recurring theme in many of the theory and ethics courses taught at journalism schools around the country (Mensing, 2010; Mensing, 2017; Grubenmann & Meckel, 2017).

As technology became increasingly accessible, user-friendly, and cost-effective, print and online legacy newspapers struggled to sustain their print product, which saw diminished returns year after year, while profiting off their digital product in a lesser way than they profited from the print product during the 20th century (see Figure 1) (Adams, 2008; Gade & Lowrey, 2011; Tandoc Jr. & Jenkins, 2017). In essence, profits on the digital product were insufficient to make up for the increasingly diminishing

returns on the print product (Adams, 2008). As such, legacy newspapers have had to cut costs wherever possible. Cuts were felt hardest by employees in terms operating costs, which include reduction in workforce as well as hiring a cheaper newsroom workforce on an only-as-needed basis (Tandoc Jr. & Jenkins, 2017). Beats were absorbed into different departments, and various sections were shuttered to save on paper and ink costs. Many of the editors who were added as newsrooms shrank were hired to be newsroom gap fillers and not necessarily to be content innovators (Hanusch, 2017; Maares & Hanusch, 2018).

Although detrimental to the legacy newspaper industry and the legacy newspaper industry's traditionalist leaders, the restructuring of the modern-day American newsroom was – and still is – a boon for recent journalism school graduates, especially the ones who are savvy enough to bring a particular skill set to fill a particular newsroom knowledge gap (Kuban, 2014; Tandoc Jr & Jenkins, 2017).

Figure 1: Print Revenue vs. Online Revenue (measured in billions of dollars)



Retrieved from Newspaper Association of America, 2012

Legacy newspaper's hierarchical newsroom management structure

The traditional legacy newspaper's newsroom has a hierarchical structure that is based in a post-World War II business model of top-down management (Gade, 2011; Bunce, 2017). Accordingly, upper management set the agenda and reporters and editors executed their orders, which at times could be considered political and/or controversial, thereby promoting the 20th century battle cry of media bias (Gade, 2004). As of 2016, that battle cry became one of "fake news," a much more stinging label and one that serves to undermine the credibility of mainstream media, particularly political media stalwarts (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2016).

American journalism, and to a large extent the American metropolitan daily newspaper, has long been in the conversational crosshairs of readers and newsroom personnel on the twin topics of objectivity and egocentricity (Schudson, 1981; Bunce, 2017). The argument is that the media was engaged in a one-way conversation which allowed newspapers to run roughshod over whomever they wanted while playing to their advertising base and ignoring any opinion that did not substantiate their own (Schudson, 1981; Sendén, Lindholm, & Sikström, 2014). Newspaper journalists and media practitioners did not see it that way, but perception and communication are key, and there was no widespread platform for naysayers to popularize their negative media bent (Gade, 2011; Sendén et al., 2014).

Many perceived that news managers and editors became tone deaf to the wants and needs of the readers and they continued to set the agenda from their hierarchical organizational perches (Gade, 2004; Sendén et al., 2014). Moreover, the people who worked under those editors were rewarded for their hard work with promotions and rose through the hierarchy to editorships of their own, thereby maintaining the management style and editorial prowess exhibited by their managers (Gade, 2004; Donsbach, 2014). Tellingly, when laborers (reporters) became managers (editors), they did not have formal management training and therefore managed in the only way they knew – the way *they* were managed (Gade, 2004). That is a counterproductive management and operational structure when it comes to innovating in response to new technology, adapting to the nuances of Internet connectivity and connectedness (Tufekzi, 2008; Fuchs, 2017).

Some managers tried to implement and adapt the practice of entrepreneurial journalism (Cohen, 2015). While the precise set of practices that constitute entrepreneurial journalism remains unclear, the concept encourages a notion of an enterprising individual journalist utilizing self-branding and self-promoting and learning to be adaptable, flexible, and self-sufficient (Cohen, 2015). This is a novel idea in the traditional newspaper newsroom, which moved away from individual reporting and more towards team reporting at the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st century (Gade, 2015; Cohen, 2015). The strategy of taking individual reporters and allowing them to flex their individuality in terms of cultivating social media handles and presence in order to get readers into larger networks was effective for newspaper

reporters (Sridhar, & Sriram, 2015). Where the idea of entrepreneurial journalism fell flat was in negating the traditional newspaper advertisement structure in favor of accounting for the individual reporters' Tweets, Facebook posts, Instagrams, and Snap Chats (Cohen, 2015). Essentially, the newspapers and the parent companies could not monetize their rising-star entrepreneurial journalists. The media in which the star journalists were disseminating the information were free, so paid circulation did not necessarily increase.

Evocatively, despite the initial misgivings about credibility of the social media platforms, mainstream journalists embraced and adopted social media (Jordaan, 2013). According to research Jordaan (2013) conducted in South Africa, professional use of social media and entrepreneurial journalism did not significantly alter the process of news selection and presentation among South Africans. What did happen, however, was that social media made stars out of some reporters who otherwise only had a byline and an occasional radio or TV interview to promote their platform (Jordaan, 2013; Cohen, 2015). A limitation of entrepreneurial journalism presented itself in the face of exploding numbers of individual followers, which at times paralleled or surpassed the followers/readership of the newspaper (Cohen, 2015). This caused many rising-star newspaper reporters to essentially go it alone and make their money freelancing rather than working as a salaried reporter at a newspaper. When they left the institutional newspaper, many of their followers left with them (Cohen, 2015). As a result, the well-intentioned though nebulous concept of entrepreneurial journalism was not the answer

that the legacy newspaper newsroom was looking for in the new world of Internet connectivity and connectedness (Cohen, 2015).

Accordingly, the legacy newsroom hierarchy reverted to a hybrid of entrepreneurial journalism and team coverage along with a smattering of individual coverage, and the management structure remained systemically sealed off to change (Cohen, 2015; Sridhar, & Sriram, 2015). No longer did newspaper circulation grow proportionately with the population, nor was it virtually recession-proof or showing double-digit returns as it did in every decade leading up to the 20th century (Gade, 2004; Sridhar & Sriram, 2015). Furthermore, when it came to hiring recent journalism school graduates, these newspaper hiring editors – themselves, for the most part, hired as reporters and promoted into management because of a job well done –hired journalism school graduates based on the same skillsets they were hired for having, which were not all-encompassing for a 21st century digital newsroom (Gade, 2004). These new hires were shaped in the same institutional forge as their hiring editors (Sridhar & Sriram, 2015).

The gap between educators and professional journalists did not necessarily open wider at the turn of the 21st century, but it was certainly exacerbated by the speedy proliferation of digitized newspapers in the field and the gradual implementation of digital journalism as an academic pursuit in the classroom (Dickson & Brandon, 2000; Russial, 2009). However, just as newspapers of varying sizes have different newsroom needs, the Internet and the digitalization of newspapers put different priorities of large-and-small-scale newspapers on their new hires fresh out of journalism school (Dickson

& Brandon, 2000; Russial, 2009). In a 1996 study, Dickson determined that editors at smaller daily newspapers were more interested in journalism graduates with basic journalism skills, whereas editors at larger dailies were more interested in new hires with a more broad-based background (also Dickson & Brandon, 2000). Therefore, the suggestion that interdisciplinary education for recent journalism school graduates was a nuanced desire for newspapers as they became more digitized is a misconception (Russial, 2009). Still, newspapers continue to try to reinvent the newsroom structure, both on the management side and the labor side (Martin, 2014). While the idea of entrepreneurial journalism was not the saving grace that newspaper managers were looking for, another innovation of the 21st century digitized newsroom was the concept of multimedia journalism (Russial 2009). Russial (2009) concluded that although the newspaper industry is moving in the direction of cross-platform multimedia work, his survey of U.S. newspapers found that newspaper editors and reporters believe that the dial was not moving quickly enough, or thoroughly enough to meet reader demands.

Traditional newspaper hierarchical management order and why it hindered innovation pre-Internet

The management structure of newsrooms post-Watergate, when there was a deluge of aspiring reporters (circa. 1972), was top-down and hierarchical (Wenger, Owens, & Thompson, 2014). That hierarchy remained the newsroom structure well into the 1990s, when the Internet was only gradually picking up momentum (2014). Media has evolved at a breakneck pace since the Internet and social media channels rose to the

forefront of media connectedness. The mainstream media newsroom structure, as well as the predominant industrial, corporate, and commercial management structures within the U.S. that had developed during and after World War II to meet wartime and post-war industrial production demands, remain top-down and hierarchical. (Donohue, Tichenor, & Olien, 1975; Gade, 2004; Ekdale, Singer, Tully, & Harmsen, 2015).

Only recently has the needle started to move in the direction of innovation. In a 2015 study, researchers found that newsroom personnel were receptive to changes in technology because journalists recognized the need to adapt their practices to newer capabilities (Ekdale, Singer, Tully, & Harmsen, 2015). Changes to an audience's relationship to the newspaper faced greater resistance, while newsroom personnel's collective response to changes within the professional culture of journalism remained the most unenthusiastic (Ekdale et al., 2015).

According to media management scholars (Weng, 2000; Lacy, Stamm, & Martin, 2014), there are few managers with the organizational clout to implement innovative structural changes. In the dynamic exchange between news, business, and technology, the reporters lose out because, historically, they have limited decision-making power and instead must yield to newspaper managers, even when they did not have the knowledge base or collective management training to consider non-hierarchical, non-traditional decisions in the newsroom (Weng, 2000). That extended to hiring new reporters as well (Weng, 2000).

For most of the 20th century, being at the top of your class at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism or at the University of Missouri or at

Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism meant that you were a shoo-in for any number of newsroom jobs at any number of publications regardless of the state of the global market or even of the publication's circulation (Wenger et al., 2014). Although copy editing was taught as a key component of the curriculum, newsroom management was not, and as such management of newsrooms became a localized style rather than one based in business management fundamentals (2014).

Without providing proper management training or whether the newly promoted managers were interested in being managers or not, this was the custom (Ekdale et al., 2015). That cultural inertia translated to newsroom personnel's collective response to changes within the professional culture of journalism as being, for the most part, unenthusiastic (Ekdale et al., 2015). By the turn of the 21st century, even if journalism schools were teaching a new curriculum to journalism students, it stands to reason that legacy newspaper hiring managers who had worked for years or decades in an environment that rewarded the status quo may not have known how to apply these new skills and resources anyway (Underwood, 1995; Chan-Olmstead, 2006; Ekdale et al., 2015).

Starting in roughly 2010, newsroom managers began to rely on young talent to assume the role of the newsroom digital media experts and to be the go-to reporters for bringing in copious amounts of content as management continued to be the gatekeepers of what content was disseminated (Price, 2012). This is because the people managing newsrooms are not classically trained in the craft of change initiatives nor do they, for the most part, hold MBAs (Underwood, 1995; Chan-Olmstead, 2006; Ekdale et al.,

2015). However, the people managing the newsroom in recent years are tasked with recruiting, employing, and retaining new hires, and they are forced to fill the digital and social media knowledge gaps with fresh journalistic minds who are well-steeped in these 21st century nuances right out of college (Price, 2012). What is more, these recent new hires are decidedly cheaper than seasoned veterans, thereby allowing management to keep a lid on operational costs (Price, 2012; Tandoc Jr. & Jenkins, 2017). These recent graduate new hires are also motivated and eager to prove their worth, which management develops to the benefit of both the publication and the new hire looking to hone his or her skills and cut his or her teeth in legacy newspaper print and online journalism (Singer, 2011; Tandoc Jr. & Jenkins, 2017).

Because the newsroom management structure has been slow to change while journalism educators continue to evolve their core curriculum, this study applies to mass communication researchers, hiring editors, journalism school administrators, and the legacy newspaper industry. The gaps between these stakeholders' contradictory perceptions and opinions will be discussed in order to determine a streamlined transition from journalism school to newspaper newsroom for a recent journalism school graduate.

Changes in the newsroom: Knowledge gaps

Another concept of concern regarding the transformation from the 20th to the 21st century newsrooms involves knowledge gaps (Donohue et al., 1975; Cacciatore et al., 2014). Research (Ekdale et al., 2015) suggests that a management knowledge gap

exists between editors and reporters because editors of most newsrooms were once reporters, promoted, and not necessarily trained on management skills in their new leadership roles. Rather, the career trajectory was that a reporter was promoted based on merit into an editor leadership and management role, and had to rely on the management style of the manager before him/her by which to lead (Ekdale et al., 2015). That is because the speed of daily journalism did not wait for a reporter-turned-editor to learn classical management curriculum (Ekdale et al., 2015). Moreover, it is because it was the traditional custom in journalism to identify talented reporters and promote them to managers.

Top newsroom editors lacked both the knowledge required to craft a strategic response to environmental fluctuation and the organizational influence to do so (Lacy et al., 2014). In the dynamic exchange between news, business, and technology, classically trained legacy newspaper journalists who had spent their careers working in newsrooms run by the traditional model were at a competitive disadvantage compared to broadcast journalists because the former did not have an understanding of the economics of a newsroom, including those of change management or of media innovation. These concepts were not as necessary to understand in a broadcast newsroom because broadcast newsrooms did not fundamentally change in the wake of Internet connectivity in the ways that a newspaper newsroom did (Arant & Anderson, 2001; Lacy et al., 2014). Moreover, change management and newsroom economics are concepts which were not historically taught in journalism schools (Weng, 2000; Arant & Anderson, 2001).

This is not because journalism has no economic value. Rather, it is because the people managing the newsroom at the turn of the 21st century did not know how to craft and lead change initiatives because they were not trained in these areas (Arant & Anderson, 2001; Chan-Olmstead, 2006). Thus, at the dawn of the Internet age when legacy newspaper operating costs were skyrocketing because paper mills were closing, printing presses were gouging, and advertising streams were shrinking, the accountants had the last word, and that last word came in the form of laying off newsroom employees to save on operating costs. Media companies either did not hire new labor, or they hired cheaper labor– usually in the form of recent college graduates – to replace the higher paid newsroom stalwarts (Gade & Lowrey, 2011).

Newsrooms traded in a particular skill set and knowledge base – their institutional knowledge – that resided with long-time, experienced employees when they opted for recent college graduates. That is not to say that one labor force is better than the other, but rather, it is to recognize that knowledge gaps exist in a student who recently graduated from journalism school as compared to a newsroom veteran who has been walking a beat for 10 years or longer (Arant & Anderson, 2001).

Similarly, recent journalism school graduates are more tech-savvy and team-oriented than traditionalist newsroom stalwarts because technology and team-oriented reporting have been the progression in journalism schools and student publications over the last decade (Arant & Anderson, 2001; Geldens & Marjoribanks, 2015).

The short-run orientation of newspaper managers from 1985 to 2005 contributed significantly to the current state of legacy newspapers and their need for an

interdisciplinary workforce (Geldens & Marjoribanks, 2015; Lacy et al., 2014). Lacy and colleagues (2014) cite the financials to support the claim that newspaper managers, in an attempt to account for falling circulation beginning with the advent of cable news and continuing with the Internet, never addressed the crux of the problem. The crux was a shift in readership from print to online by a bulk of the customers. Moreover, newspaper managers did not consider the long-term implications of online journalism, which were disappearing subscription revenue and diluted advertising revenue. Rather, what publishers did was to raise advertising rates while managers scaled back newsroom personnel as well as the reach of the news coverage and circulation, thereby forfeiting the far suburbs and forsaking the outlying areas for the more lucrative center city (Lacy et al., 2014). All this scaling back translated into a diminished workforce and a diminished reader base, and it meant those reporters who were not laid off assumed the brunt of the work of those who were, reducing their ability to adapt and innovate (Geldens & Marjoribanks, 2015).

Changes to the traditional money-in structure

Another concept relevant to changes in the legacy newsroom industry is that newsrooms abandoned their traditional advertising structure (Gade & Lowrey, 2011). In so doing, publishers tried to triage the profit hemorrhaging by running some probably ill-advised advertising strategies like raising rates throughout the 1990s on their longtime customers because newspapers in the 1990s (before the Internet) still faced little or no local advertising competition (Lacy et al., 2014). Newspaper operating

budgets are beholden to robust advertising (Lacy et al., 2014). When the ad dollars dried up, managers stopped hiring personnel. That is when in the early 2000s, the Internet caught on and cut an even deeper swath into the advertising bottom line (Singer, 2003; Geldens & Marjoribanks, 2015). As a result, newspapers tried to make up for the lost advertising revenue with a bullish approach to beefing up circulation which started with a plan to give newspaper content online for free. The rationale was essentially this: If we post it for free, readers will become so dependent on it that they will pay for a subscription (Gade, 2011). What happened was the opposite: By posting their content online for free, legacy newspapers completely devalued their print product (Gade, 2004). That devaluation contributed to the increasing debate that journalism was a profession about to be phased out by society (Gade, 2004).

There were also moves on the part of the larger dailies for acquisition and borrowing, but more often than not, the acquiring company assumed too much debt, a disgruntled workforce, and no clear-cut way to increase circulation in the wake of Internet connectedness (Lacy et al., 2014; Wenger et al., 2018). The Internet became ever more accessible to news consumers, first in the form of desktops, then laptops, then tablets, now phones (Lacy et al., 2014; Wenger et al., 2018). All the while, newspapers failed to leverage the ever-evolving technology on their behalf and the results were reflected on the continuously eroding bottom line (Greer & Mensing, 2006; Lacy et al., 2014).

Impact/effect on media industry

Some key concepts and theories point to the need for additional research in order to understand where newspapers are coming from vis-à-vis management and vision, and where they are headed in the future. Lacy, Stamm, and Martin (2014) shed light on a habitual newsroom situation – one that has been happening right under reporters' noses for 30 years. It is this situation that *helped* put newspapers in the current economic plight they are in, and it is a situation begot by a newsroom culture that did not have a felt need to change (Burnes, 2004; Lacy et al., 2014). The situation is this: Newsroom managers did not – for more than three decades – have a strategic plan for the future (Lacy et al., 2014).

The industry had little to no long-term strategy dating back to the 1970s, so it vacillated as culture and societal norms changed (Massey, 2016). This is historically a reactionary response popularized by Bagdikian in his article *The Politics of American Newspapers* in 1972. This reaction, when adapted to contemporary times, isolated newspapers from management change initiatives in the wake of the Internet revolution, and from a financial perspective, it rendered their print business model unsustainable (Bagdikian, 1972; Massey, 2016). Furthermore, news media firms have a strategy to consolidate through acquisitions and mergers, and by doing so increase their market dominance (oligopoly or near monopoly) and economies of scale (Gade, 2004; Gade, 2011; Lacy et al., 2014). This strategy is a mass media strategy, where the number of media firms was relatively small, market share was high, entry barriers (start-up costs) into media were high, and competition was comparatively much less (Lacy et al., 2014).

This meant that not many people or companies were quick to jump into the newspaper game, because it was very hard to establish market share and brand identity if you did (Lacy et al., 2014). The environment was very much one of the rich get richer in terms of newspaper circulation and financial growth. Newspapers grew accustomed to hiring reporters from journalism schools to work a beat, and the only management training those reporters received for future promotions as editors came from what they observed both in the newsroom and on their beat (Gade, 2004; Massey, 2016). There was no reason to change the system for decades as the collective management mentality was it wasn't broken (Gade, 2011).

However, by the turn of the 21st century, corporate entities and media stakeholders recognized that more of the same was not an option in the new digital media world and additional touches and long-term plans were introduced into a traditional hierarchically managed newsroom (Massey, 2016). While management tried to reinvent the tasks of reporters in the newsroom to meet the demands of a readership now accustomed to news delivery by ways other than the morning newspaper, reporters slowly watched their newsroom ranks shrink (Usher, 2015). As layoffs became commonplace throughout the first decade of the 21st century, reporting roles were consolidated and new positions were rarely created unless they involved aggregating several other former newsroom positions into one (Usher, 2015). Between 2010 and 2014, newspaper managers and editors became exceptionally dour by what was perceived to be the most recent innovative step in a series of innovative missteps (i.e., entrepreneurial journalism, Internet pay walls) (Usher, 2015). This innovation designed

to increase digital information dissemination was called the CND, or the Continuous News Desk (Usher, 2015).

The CND, popularized by the *Miami Herald*, was conceived with the intention to facilitate breaking news, but newsroom management knew that news does not always break when and where you want it to, nor does news stay fresh until it can be properly edited when a newsroom is most staffed (Usher, 2015). Management felt that a key piece in a larger economic puzzle of newsroom survival would be a regular supply of breaking news – continuously monitored and staffed around the clock – to keep the websites fresh and up-to-date in order for people to continue clicking on the site throughout the day and night (Usher, 2015). As Usher (2015) stated, the CND served as a way for newspapers to remain constantly relevant other than when the morning or evening paper was delivered, and for reporters to be able to finally see some potential for a digital change to their daily routines (Jordaan, 2013; Usher, 2015). The CND was a resounding success at the *Miami Herald* and caught on in newsrooms at other major and mid-major dailies, including the *Dallas Morning News*. The only problem with this model was for it to be truly continuous, it needed to be staffed around-the-clock, and updated just as often. This took the idea of a general assignment desk reporter and put it on steroids, for not only would the CND be manning the phones for breaking news, as it were, but it would be actively looking for breaking news and refreshing it online in real time (Usher, 2015). But according to one source from the *Miami Herald* in Usher's study: "We don't have a morning breaking news reporter, we don't have a dedicated night breaking news/cops reporter, we haven't been able to fill those spots. … It is just

me in the morning. I answer the phones now because there's no one to answer them anymore. This is something that really hurts us" (Usher, 2015, p. 1014). The reason was because most of the resources were dedicated to the CND. Newspapers realized that the CND was here to stay, but they did not know how to keep it staffed and operational without it coming at the expense of other news departments because they did not have a sufficiently robust budget (Usher, 2015).

Perhaps if the CND had been phased in earlier before the advent of news blogs, community journalists, and other non-traditional online content producers who sprung up to fill the gap that traditional print newspapers opened, there would have been continuous monetary streams and content creation over time. Essentially, there was a lack of strategic planning and thinking on the part of newsroom management in the face of an unprecedented challenge.

Part of the reason newspaper managers may have had a hard time figuring out how to reorganize the operational structure with the various positions in the newsroom while on a limited budget is because they did not have to in the past (Usher, 2015). Now that they had to make an innovative change, many newsroom managers simply did not have the management experience, the knowledge, or the motivation to do so (Usher, 2015).

To say the Internet revolution disrupted the legacy newspaper industry is an understatement. No longer the agenda setters, legacy newspaper editors needed to revamp their business model in order to stem the monetary losses incurred from loss of subscriptions and loss of advertising revenue. Newspaper managers did attempt to

innovate their newsroom structures and try new ventures like the CND, but they struggled to maintain their identity with a print medium that was day-by-day being rendered obsolete by the deluge of online news content. Newspapers were no longer competing with other newspapers for readership and advertising dollars, they were now also competing with any other news organization with a website that created news content.

The following chapter spells out how legacy newspapers arrived at the precarious predicament they find themselves in, and the literature review also accounts for the various curricula retooling that occurred at journalism schools to account for the staying power of online news.

Chapter 3: Changes in the academic journalism environment

While the newspaper industry continued to experience intense periods of fluctuation and as it continued to wrestle with management/labor muscle spasms, the academy also made a course correction regarding what was being taught to journalism students. The industry historically drew its workforce from various journalism schools, programs, and concentrations at four-year colleges, ever since the University of Missouri opened the first journalism school in 1908. Newspapers, for a variety of reasons, began looking elsewhere for new-hires beginning around 2008 to replace an aging workforce that was classically trained in traditional journalism skills and not in nuanced digital and social media journalism skills (Creech & Nadler, 2018). They began hiring an increasing number of business school graduates and MBAs, and some newspapers began hiring computer science graduates because they had a digital edge and skill set that the newsroom needed in order to make their online content interactive and engaging. Additionally, the process of journalism school accreditation and whether it was a help or a hindrance when it came to attracting and training students based on a set of accepted guidelines came under harsh scrutiny (Lynch, 2015; Creech & Nadler, 2018).

As the newsroom changes, the academy changed as well, and a more prevalent position was taken on the role of internships/externships/experiential learning as a preparatory measure for students. However, while many journalism programs

encouraged an internship or externship, not many journalism programs changed their curriculum to make them mandatory (Lynch, 2015).

The 21st Century intersection of the journalism skills learned in college and the needs of the workforce

When the majority of metropolitan daily newspapers moved their content online in the late 1990s, managers could more easily gather and view extensive data about the behavior of their audiences than ever before because of the innate capabilities of online content that allow managers to track clicks of digital content. In essence, the data that they historically had to wait months or fiscal quarters for vis-à-vis increased circulation were now available in real time. Which stories did audiences read? How long did they stay on each web page? What articles did they share, and how many times were they re-shared? (Blom & Davenport, 2012). Cullen (2014) has found that editors use this information when they make editorial decisions. For example, if metrics show that a particular story is popular, it will be placed prominently on the website homepage, and stories on a similar topic will be commissioned in the future. This adaptation to a new medium was slow to come in the newspaper industry, as the first decade of the 21st century illustrated that a focus remained on the print product of a newspaper and not necessarily the online product (Gade & Lowrey, 2011). That was due in large part to the popular view, simplistic though it may seem today, of the World Wide Web as a means of entertainment in the early days, and not as a serious news delivery vehicle (Gade & Lowrey, 2011; Lin, 2012).

Just as the industry was slow to change its hierarchical structure of management, so too was the academy slow to change its silo-based structure of teaching multimedia journalism, just not as slow as the industry (Lin, 2012). Some universities had been exploring issues around the changing media industry and its impact on journalism education since the mid-1990s, and that research picked up in the first half of this century (Castaneda, Murphy, & Hether, 2005; Lin, 2012). However, the year 2005 was when changes were measurably present across a number of journalism schools (Lin, 2012). A 2005 study (Castaneda, Murphy, & Hether) reported that by 2005, 60 percent of the U.S. journalism schools were preparing students to work across multimedia platforms (print, online, video, social media), and an online multimedia survey (Lin, 2012) documented curriculum innovation in convergent journalism education across the U.S. six years later. In essence, the academy was faster out of the gates to change with the times, although those changes were not universally recognized as the educational standard until 2015, almost two decades after the mainstreaming of the Internet (Wenger et al., 2018).

Journalism schools have integrated convergent journalism to varying degrees, from reworking one or two subjects to a full-scale overhaul of journalism curriculum (Lowrey, Daniels, & Becker, 2005); Lin, 2012). Indeed, journalism schools are tracking positively in academic and commercial polls regarding its curriculum overhaul to match cultural, societal, and industry transformation (although the industry fundamentally resisted change in the early part of 21st century). For more than a decade, research (Adams, 2008; Lepre & Bleske, 2005; Mattern, 2003) has shown a subtle disconnect

between the journalism skills learned in journalism schools and the needs of the professional workforce. This is by no means because of a lack of effort on the part of educators. Quite the contrary: As Huang and colleagues (2006) determined, although 60 percent of journalism schools in the United States were redesigning their curricula to include courses that prepared students for producing news across multiple platforms and among multiple disciplines, once a program became committed to a particular curriculum, journalism educators and administrators recognized that the new curriculum could not be set in stone but must be able to adapt to industry changes (Lin, 2012). The rise of new technologies presented a conundrum to many journalism schools and their various programs struggling with the choice of whether to invest sweat equity in new skills classes or to revamp existing classes (Carpenter, 2009). This paradigm continues to this day. Moreover, it butts up against a hostile environment toward journalism and journalists, and many parents over the last 10 years have been reticent to send their children to earn expensive journalism degrees in college when the legacy print newspaper field was shrinking and its integrity was under attack (Blom & Davenport, 2012).

Therein lies a question that needs to be studied further: How are journalism programs to implement a curriculum that must be fluid and adaptable to industry wants and needs? Likewise, when should that curriculum be completely overhauled versus tweaked? (Carpenter, 2009).

The change-agency momentum of American journalism programs was studied and determined to be slowing down, according to researchers at Michigan State

University, as early as 2012. A national study of U.S. journalism program directors conducted by Blom and Davenport (2012) showed that the majority of program directors agreed that training in writing and reporting is still considered the bedrock of journalism but knowledge about visual communication has become an increasing priority. After that, however, the same respondents disagreed on which specific courses take precedence for all journalism students (Blom & Davenport, 2012). This disagreement forces a focus on the disconnect that drives it. "The academy always strives to offer the best education to their students to become the next Pulitzer Prize winner, but sometimes it is hard to know when, or even if, a curriculum should be changed" (Blom & Davenport, 2012, p. 71).

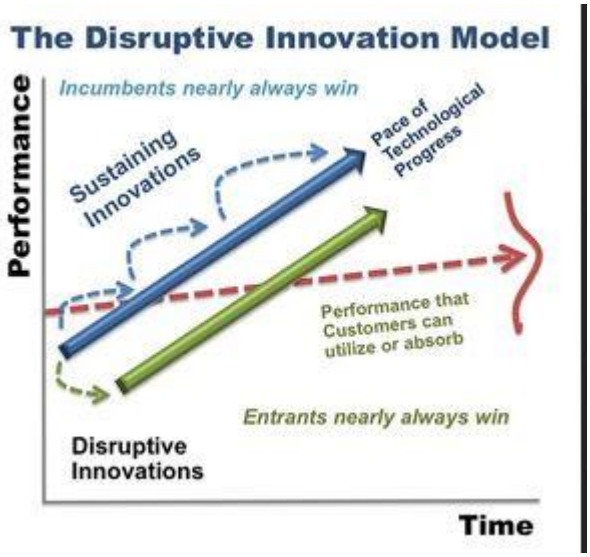
Obstacles journalism educators face and the concept of disruptive innovation

Journalism remains in an extended period of transformation almost two decades after the Internet became mainstream, and journalism educators still face a number of obstacles in trying to keep up (Wenger et al., 2018). According to a Knight Foundation report (Lynch, 2015), U.S. journalism education, as recently as 2015, faced three major hurdles: lack of currency and innovation in the curriculum, lack of faculty expertise in new media, and accreditation standards that protect the status quo. But there is something else at play. "Innovation" has become a buzzword and a central ideal driving many interventions by academic administrators aimed at saving journalism (Creech & Nadler, 2018, p. 82).

Administrators' calls for innovations in journalism education are often veiled as calls for institutional preservation (Creech & Nadler, 2018). Many academic journalism administration advocates concur that change is necessary if journalism's core tenets and democratic values are to survive (Creech & Nadler, 2018). One such lens through which this challenge can be viewed is disruptive innovation. Disruptive innovation is defined as an innovation that creates a new market and value network and disrupts and then displaces an established market and value network (Christensen, Skok, & Allworth, 2012). Often, these advocates invoke a simplified version of the theory of disruptive innovation to presume that established legacy newspapers need to anticipate market-driven and technological changes if they are to preserve journalism's public value (*see Figure 2*) (Christensen et al., 2012; Creech & Nadler, 2018). The onus is therefore on the journalism schools to keep up with the industry by training the next wave of reporters to persevere. However, the perception of both academic administrators and legacy newspaper editors, as will be documented and described in the "results" section, is that conversations between the two parties are infrequent and in the case of this research, virtually nonexistent.

Disruptive innovation is apropos as a theoretical lens when taken together with the concept of journalism as a "knowledge profession." As will be described, part of the disruption that occurred within the industry and the nuances adopted by the academy regarding journalism instruction were necessary to theorize journalism as the "knowledge profession."

Figure 2: Disruptive Innovation creates a new market and value network and eventually disrupts an existing market and value network.



Journalism as a knowledge profession

Many academic administrators view the disruptor as knowledge, although disagreement surrounds the questions of "knowledge of what?", and "how much knowledge is needed for a recent journalism school graduate to be considered knowledgeable?" (Donsbach, 2014; Lynch, 2015). Donsbach (2014) said that journalism is the new knowledge profession, saying, "In a sociological sense, knowledge is a basis for the functioning of societies, because shared knowledge forms the basis for communication and common action in a society" (Donsbach, 2014, p. 666). By this rationale, journalists in the new knowledge profession should widen their societal role, meaning that having a pedigree and skill set pertaining solely to journalism acumen is not necessarily enough of a knowledge base in a profession

whereby the author of any particular story is presumed to be an expert in that particular field. Donsbach (2014) believes that having a knowledge base broader than only journalism – if journalism is to be the new knowledge profession – is necessary for three reasons: First, because of the Internet and the availability of knowledge with the click of a mouse, the educational system is less able to identify which subjects among a plethora of available choices need to be included into a relatively fixed – and already demanding– school curriculum (Donsbach, 2014). Second, the role of the university library – long the repository of scholarly knowledge yet not altogether available for those not affiliated with the university – no longer maintains a knowledge monopoly, nor are those affiliated patrons the lone scholars because of Internet availability and societal connectedness (Donsbach, 2014). Third, the Internet empowers the individual to take control of the knowledge-retrieval process. No longer is knowledge received only during business hours. The Internet allows people to research 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Accepting Donsbach's premise that journalism is the new knowledge profession, we must therefore accept his definitions of its specific competencies. He asserts that there are five basic fields of competence, which are not new to journalism education but rarely, if ever, exist in a single educational program (Donsbach, 2014). The five basic fields of competence are that a journalist should (1) possess a keen awareness of relevant history and current affairs, as well as a capacity for analytical thinking, (2) have expertise in the specific subjects about which he or she reports, (3) have scientifically based knowledge about the communication process, (4) have mastered

journalistic skills, and (5) conduct himself or herself in an ethical manner commensurate with the standards and practices of the profession (Donsbach, 2014).

As such, scholars maintain that most journalism school curricula in contemporary times adheres to this vision of intellectual resources for journalism as a knowledge profession because there is a definitive agreement among administrators as to what content and lessons *must* come from journalism school, and whether all five parameters are being met (Ferrier, 2013; Lynch, 2015).

A goal of journalism education is to build functioning communication structures within communities (Mensing, 2010). Accredited journalism schools have different requirements that students must fulfill before graduation. All require students to take a set number of liberal arts, science, and math/statistics courses (Mensing, 2010). Then, journalism schools and departments require students to take certain core courses and some electives in their major (Mensing, 2010). Some accredited programs are affected by external constraints on the number and type of courses offered, particularly schools accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC), which have limits on the number of journalism classes their students can take (2010). Some scholars may maintain that this is not a bad thing or a restriction because if JMC programs were not restricted in the number of JMC courses a student could take, then a program might require students to take all of their courses in JMC. Other scholars, like Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism professor and former Dean Dr. Bradley Hamm believe that JMC curriculum should be determined by the particular program and not have to adhere to the standards

of the ACEJMC, which treats all JMC programs equal. Dr. Hamm purports in this dissertation's "results" section and in the "conclusion" that all journalism schools are not created equal, and therefore, since journalism is the new knowledge profession, should be able to police themselves within those five constructs.

In order to learn which courses stressed by accredited journalism programs and how their administrations view the requirements, Blom and Davenport (2012) conducted a content analysis to determine what directors of journalism programs think are important courses for all journalism majors to take. The following Table (Figure 3) shows details of course ranking in order of importance as determined by department heads.

Figure 3 Percentage of respondents who picked the individual courses as part of their seven most important core courses (Blom & Davenport, 2012)

Media ethics & law	58%
Reporting (gathering and storytelling)	55%
Multimedia and storytelling	47%
Writing across the media	43%
Reporting (news gathering)	40%
Visual communication	36%
Feature writing	34%
Media law	33%
Mass communication research	30%
Media ethics	29%
Critical thinking	29%
Journalism history	28%
Publication editing	28%
Mass media and social groups	21%
Investigative journalism	21%
Reporting (storytelling)	18%
Computer-assisted reporting	17%
Web publishing	17%
Media technology	15%

Media literacy	13%
Entrepreneurial Journalism	11%
Editorial and opinion writing	9%
Media economics	7%
Community journalism	7%
News service/newsroom	7%
Media Management	6%
Study abroad	6%
International journalism	5%
Public opinion	4%
Civic journalism	3%
Literacy journalism	2%
Blog writing	1%
Media sociology of news	1%
Other	12%

A survey of 134 journalism program directors in the U.S. showed that of the above professional competencies, only "media ethics and law" and "reporting" belong to the core of journalism education for a majority. "Mass communication research" is mentioned by only 30 percent, "critical thinking" by 29 and "media sociology of news" by 1 percent (Blom & Davenport, 2012). The authors see the schools as caught in the middle when trying to accommodate new technologies. It would appear that those skills enter the programs at the expense of general intellectual and professional content (Donsbach, 2014). However, because this was a quantitative content analysis and not a qualitative study with the option for respondents to elaborate on their answers, the journalism school directors were pigeonholed into responding to set choices that may or may not have encompassed the entirety of the department's mission.

Seven years ago, Wenger and Owens (2012) conducted a content analysis of all employment opportunities posted by the Top 10 American newspaper and broadcast

journalism companies over between 2008 and 2009. They coded more than 1,400 postings to determine the most desirable skills and attributes for job candidates. They saw an observed change over time, particularly concerning an overriding emphasis on web, multimedia, and social media skills. However, those skills that related to one of the above-mentioned professional competences played almost no role when media institutions recruited those journalists (Wenger et al., 2018; Wenger & Owens, 2012). Almost all skills referred to technical or practical abilities and experiences. They concluded that: "educators would do well to get ahead of the industry need by preparing students who are ready to step into leadership roles in the area of social media and mobile delivery" (Wenger & Owens, 2012, p. 23). That, however, is only part of the solution to a larger problem as described in the aforementioned literature review in the previous chapter, concerning the particular skills a hiring editor desires from a journalism graduate and whether those particular skills butt up against the set core curricula of accredited journalism programs (See Appendix 3 for ACEJMC Curriculum and Instruction Standards).

As a follow-up, Wenger and colleagues (2018) conducted a study aimed at isolating the specific skills and attributes required of journalists seeking employment in today's newsrooms. The authors were interested in both the enduring traditional abilities required by accredited journalism schools and the emerging areas of expertise necessary to succeed in journalism careers (Wenger et al., 2018). They performed a quantitative content analysis of job postings of the Top 10 broadcast and Top 10 newspaper companies in the country, predicated on a 2015 Pew Research report, which

ranked companies by revenue. Analyzing the postings by job title (see Figure 4), the 10 most sought-after positions out of more than 1,800 postings were reporter (n= 330), producer (n= 134), web writer (n= 88), photographer (n= 72), internships/nonpaid positions (n= 71), web producer (n= 68), anchor (n= 66), editor (n= 61), executive producer (n= 43), and assignment editor (n= 40) (2018).

Figure 4: Top 20 skills and attributes in job postings in 2015 (Wenger et al., 2018).

Skill/attribute	Percentage of posts
Previous experience	72
Writing	62
Web/multimedia	62
Working under pressure/deadlines	56
Team work	52
News judgment	49
Social media	47
Posting to web	40
Video/photo	39
Ability to communicate	38
Aggressive	37
Nonlinear editing	36
Mobile	35
Creativity	34
Enterprise	34
Storytelling	32
Multitasking	30
Writing for web	28
Leadership	28

However, a limitation is that this quantitative study had to package various tangible and intangible skills like interpersonal skills, presentation skills, and demeanor in order to present them in a comprehensible way on the survey. Coding for "job type" involved creating broad categories based on the job duties described in the postings (Wagner et al., 2018). "Multiple platform" positions, defined as those that reference as many as 20 cross-platform skills and attributes in a single advertisement, was the largest job type in the study, with 48.4% (n= 537) postings falling into the category (Wagner et al., 2018). The problem is that such a Frankenstein position would naturally be the largest job type, as the phrasing makes it a catchall for some 20 positions. This answer does not entirely distill down the individual qualities that hiring editors are looking for, as the majority of respondents register on the outside of anything that was asked in the survey.

The existing quantitative research that looks at the intersection of the industry with academy shows that the profession and the academy are in constant flux.

The research conducted for this study further explores that intersection from a qualitative perspective in order to do a deep dig into the answers provided by newspaper hiring editors and journalism academic administrators. This study will take a snapshot of societal and cultural norms in the journalism profession in 2018/2019 and in journalism schools in contemporary American society by speaking to the very people who are tasked with the charge of shaping the profession and the educational system. By identifying an intersection of the information, this study provides information that will be beneficial for academic institutions when employing an ever-changing

curriculum, and to the journalism profession when legacy newspaper hiring editors are seeking out journalism school graduate new-hires.

Accreditation and what it means to journalism schools

When it comes to touting a program's reputation, being accredited has long been a quality that journalism programs prize. That is because becoming accredited is not an easy process (see Appendix 3). Although the U.S. Department of Education does not accredit universities or individual college and university programs, it does rely on several organizations that are considered reliable authorities to determine quality of education and training (U.S. Department of Education's Office of Postsecondary Education, 2018). When it comes to journalism, communications, and mass communication schools and departments, the accreditation process is handled and administered by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) (2018). The ACEJMC accredits and thereby sanctions 112 current journalism schools and programs, as well as five with provisional accreditation (down three from 2012) (Fuse & Lambiase, 2010; Blom, Davenport, & Bowe, 2012).

According to Blom et al (2012), there are distinct advantages for journalism schools that go through the process of becoming accredited. First, the participating schools must provide extensive and comprehensive evidence of their past accomplishments as well as their future plans when the ACEJMC site teams show up to inspect. Second, the various professors in the journalism school undergoing accreditation review provide their research en mass in a way that is a reflection of the

trends of research and practice in the university and in the industry (Blom, Davenport, & Bowe, 2012). Third, the accreditation process allows the council of peers to gauge how that particular journalism program is doing compared to other programs across the country (Blom, Davenport, & Bowe, 2012). Fourth, "a certain aura of pride is associated with being able to tell prospective students and parents that a program is accredited (Blom, Davenport, & Bowe, 2012, p. 393).

The question of whether accreditation is necessary and/or beneficial has been asked for decades, but it became a matter of public consternation in 2010 when Seamon and Claussen co-authored a letter to the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) declaring that no evidence exists that accredited journalism schools are better than unaccredited ones. The professors reviewed 30 years worth of research comparing and contrasting accredited journalism schools with unaccredited ones, and found many more similarities than differences (Seamon & Claussen, 2010). No conclusive evidence existed that accredited journalism schools were significantly or consistently more advanced or that they prepared students better. "A review of the literature comparing accredited and unaccredited JMC programs seems to suggest that ACEJMC accreditation is a credential whose reputation exceeds its actual benefit. Although the idea of formalizing a process by which programs can be evaluated and 'certified' as being high quality is well-intentioned, the operationalization of that idea has proved to be difficult" (Seamon, 2010, p. 17). The effects of the accreditation process on non-accredited schools has not been investigated.

Two years later, six large foundations – some of which were comprised of industry experts and academic scholars – jumped head-first into the accreditation debate in a very public way.

An open letter to university college presidents and provosts set off the equivalent of a journalism bomb at the 100th anniversary convention of the AEJMC conference in Chicago in 2012, and that open letter challenged the direction of journalism education and called into question whether journalism schools were being hamstrung by an accrediting body that was out of step with industry demands (Finberg, 2012). Six very prominent, very well-heeled foundations called on journalism schools to move faster and further in order to change the way journalism is taught (Finberg, 2012). In straightforward language, the letter, signed by the Knight Foundation, the McCormick Foundation, Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation, Scripps Howard Foundation, Brett Family Foundation, and the Wyncote Foundation, declared that journalism schools were no longer keeping pace with the new career opportunities for journalists and that there was a resistance in the academy to changing courses that were taught and how they were taught.

> We believe journalism and communications schools must be willing to recreate themselves if they are to succeed in playing their vital roles as news creators and innovators. Some leading schools are doing this but most are not. Deans cite regional accreditation bodies and university administration for putting up roadblocks to thwart these changes.

> However, we think the problem may be more systemic than that. We are calling on university presidents and provosts to join us in supporting the reform of journalism and mass communication education (Findberg, 2012).

At its core, the letter said that journalism schools that were accredited or that were seeking accreditation were not able to develop curricula commensurate with contemporary professional standards because the standards by which schools were awarded accreditation by the ACEJMC were archaic (Finberg, 2012). Additionally, the number of journalism coursework hours required by the ACEJMC butted up against the number of hours students were required to take for their degrees (Finberg, 2012). Essentially, the letter argued, journalism administrators and presidents and provosts were unwilling to revisit and change the protocols and requirements of ACEJMC, which were drafted before the Internet explosion at the turn of the 21st century, with new course offerings that made more digital and social media sense.

> We firmly support efforts by The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications to modernize standards. The council recognizes that schools need to provide students the ability to pursue career paths as journalist-entrepreneurs or journalism-technologists.
>
> Furthermore, we believe ACEJMC should develop accreditation standards that spotlight the importance of technology and innovation.

> University facilities must be kept up to date. Currently, many are not. Schools that do not update their curriculum and upgrade their faculties to reflect the profoundly different digital age of communication will find it difficult to raise money from foundations interested in the future of news. The same message applies to administrators who acquiesce to regional accrediting agencies that want terminal degrees as teaching credentials with little regard to competence as the primary concern (Finberg, 2012).

This last statement was a veiled threat to journalism programs that relied on research and teaching grants from these and other foundations: Change or lose funding (Finberg, 2012). Although no published research on the impact of this open letter exists, new research by Blom, Bowe, and Davenport (2018) suggests that some journalism administrators clearly heard the message and agreed with the content. Since the open letter was released, several prominent journalism schools let their accreditation status lapse, thereby spearheading the debate in academic circles about whether accreditation – which occurs every six years – is still necessary, or whether it is actually detrimental (Blom et al., 2018).

In the spring of 2017, Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, Media, and Integrated Marketing Communications, one of the most storied and respected JMC schools in the world, elected to abjure its ACEJMC accreditation status (Blom et al., 2018). Months later, another highly respected journalism schools, the

University of California-Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism, also renounced its accreditation status (Blom et al., 2018). According to Medill's then-Dean Bradley Hamm, as quoted in the research paper, "As we near the 2020s, we expect far better than a 1990s-era accreditation organization that resists change – especially as education and careers in our field evolve rapidly. All fields benefit from a world-class review process, and unfortunately the gap between ACEJMC today and what it could, and should, be is huge" (Blom et al., 2018, p. 2). Blom et al. (2018) concluded that the decisions of some journalism and mass communication schools, like Northwestern and the UC-Berkeley graduate program, to eschew accreditation were based on one of two considerations: (1) Insufficient resources to comply with accreditation procedure or (2) Philosophical disagreements with one or more of the standards.

Irrespective of why some programs opted out and will continue to do so, and considering the upcoming ACEJMC process that journalism schools are ramping up for as it pertains to requesting accreditation or applying to keep accreditation, Blom et al (2018) conclude that the accrediting standard limiting the number of journalism and mass communication semester credits does not help students who want to take more courses or add minors in order to maximize their marketability in journalism.

Impact/effect on future of journalism education

Nearly all journalists in a traditional newsroom are college-educated (Mensing, 2017). However, as discovered in the research for this dissertation, there is a lack of

qualitative research that specifically points to criteria that those college-educated hiring editors look for when they are reading over recent journalism school graduates' resumes. The quantitative research that exists (Wegner & Ownes, 2012; Mensing, 2017; Blom et al., 2018; Wegner, 2018) does an excellent job of priming the field of journalism academic administration and legacy newspaper media management for follow-up exploration. This dissertation was undertaken with the previous quantitative research in mind, and a desire to move the science forward by investigating in-depth the rationale behind answers given in past research.

The goal is for this study to lead to other research adaptable by scholars and implemented at an institutional level regarding the process by which educators instruct students and prepare them for careers in legacy newspaper journalism, particularly because legacy newspapers and the foundations composed of their representatives have openly and notoriously called on university presidents and journalism school administrators to change the journalism curricula to meet industry needs (Newton, Bell, Ross, Philipps, Shoemaker, & Haas, 2012).

This dissertation's goal is to research the qualities that make a journalism student attractive as a new-hire to a legacy newspaper hiring editor, then highlight journalism school curriculum variances in order to determine if what is being taught is indeed what hiring editors are looking for. Conversely, this research looks at whether there is adequate communication between legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism academic administrators so that the two entities can co-evolve in order for

recent journalism school graduates to have the required tools for a newspaper job upon graduation. The data unearthed by this qualitative study helps to address these concerns.

Chapter 4: Theoretical Perspective

This study was couched using grounded theory. Grounded theory is a systematic research approach involving the discovery of theory through data collection and analysis (Harris, 2015). In particular, grounded theory's focus is on inductively constructing theory through methodic gathering and analysis of data (Harris, 2015).

Grounded theory

Grounded theory was first envisaged by Glaser and Strauss (1967). This was in response to what they believed was an overemphasis on the verification of theory in qualitative research. Theories attempt to explain not just isolated elements of a phenomenon, but rather, all aspects of a phenomenon (Baran & David, 2012). Glaser and Strauss (1967) maintained that theory that is grounded in data would enable researchers to explore new areas that had not previously been covered or explored by existing theories. This mode of thinking was in direct contrast to the deductive layering of theory, which was the prevailing wisdom in the middle 1960s, when grounded theory was conceived, and hitherto. Revealingly, grounded theory involves the creation of theory, rather than the testing of it (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory is either a set of propositions or a theoretical discussion: "The form in which a theory is presented does not make it a theory; it is a theory because it explains or predicts something" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 31).

The primary goal of grounded theory is to find emerging patterns. Grounded theory and the work derived by identifying emerging patters is distinguished in several ways:

(1) Data may be coded and analyzed simultaneously (Strauss & Corbin, 1990)

(2) The analysis focuses on action and process rather than themes (Schwandt, 2015)

(3) The researcher gains multiple sources of data are gathered (Lincoln & Guba, 1998)

(4) The researcher may sample other populations (or activities) to explain the theoretical construct (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

There are different potential theoretical outcomes in this study, yet using grounded theory as a guide, those additional theoretical patterns presented themselves through the research process and during the in-depth interviews. The following theories are ones I considered before going into the interview process of this dissertation. However, because I was using grounded theory as my primary theoretical framework and since my research was fluid, these theories were not decided upon until after I conducted the various interviews with the two groups of actors: professional legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism academic administrators. In essence, grounded theory enabled me to leave the door open for other theories, and three other theories presented themselves as a result.

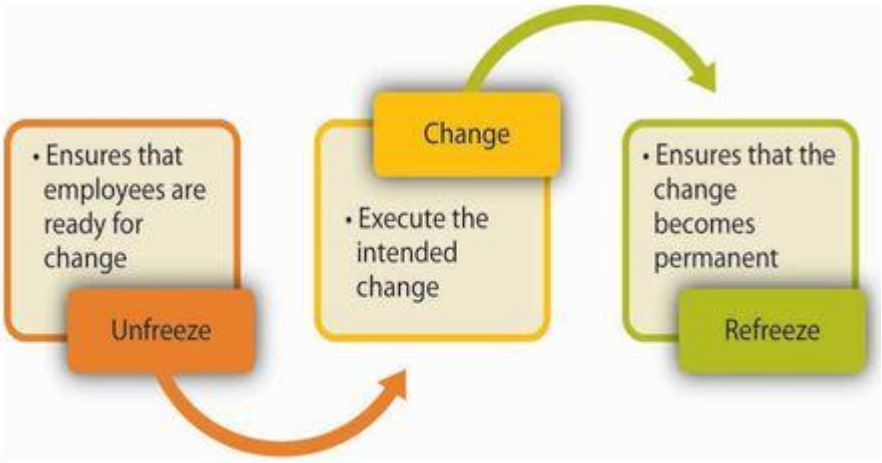
For the industry, the theoretical lenses through which I viewed this study was Lewin's field theory (Lewin, 1946; Burnes, 2004).

Theoretical framework for industry: Lewin's field theory

Field Theory (Lewin, 1946) states that one should view the status quo as being maintained by certain conditions (Burnes, 2004). As such, group behavior is an intricate set of symbolic interactions that not only have an effect on group structure, but also on the individuals who make up that group (Burnes, 2004). Kurt Lewin expanded upon the idea of group behavior when he explained group dynamics, or the importance of the group in influencing the behavior of its members (Burnes, 2004). It was this work that led Lewin to conceive of action research, which considers the group's present situation, the dangers, and most importantly, how they should be addressed (Burnes, 2004). Lewin took these three elements and formed an integrated approach to analyzing, understanding, and bringing about change at the group, organizational, and societal levels, which he called the 3-Step Model of organizational change (Burnes, 2004).

By unfreezing, or destabilizing the present, organizational equilibrium is thereby diluted in the run-up to discarding old behavior and successfully adopting new behavior (Burnes, 2004). Next, in the changing step, Lewin argues that one has to take into account the iterative process of accounting for all the forces at work (Burnes, 2004). Finally, in the refreezing process, managers must stabilize the group in order to ensure that new behaviors are steadied and safe from regression (Burnes, 2004) (see Figure 5*)*.

Figure 5: Lewin's 3-step model of organizational change



Adapted from Mullins (2010)

As a result, organizations must be prepared for constant change (Drucker, 2008; Kanter, 1983). Integrating corporate processes for developing a sustainability report helps identify the hurdles organizations face and the way in which organizational change toward improved accountability occurs (Adams & McNicholas, 2007). This can lead to changes in sustainability performance (Adams & McNicholas, 2007). Tellingly, Lewin's felt-need concept arises from a recognition that successful action is based on an accurate field analysis of a situation, properly identifying all possible solutions, and choosing the one that is most in line with the needs of the group (Burnes, 2004). Distilled further, the felt-need concept occurs when a person realizes that change is necessary (Burnes, 2004). To address the enduring question of industry wants with regard to recent journalism

school graduates, we must understand why the legacy newsroom was so slow to change, and once the legacy newsroom did start changing, why managers were conflicted as to the organization's needs. As previously discussed, because the legacy newspaper as an institution was slow to change, they surrendered readership and market share to online startups and to other news outlets (i.e., radio, television, and magazines) who diversified their news coverage by adding websites with continuous news coverage. The expanded field of media players brokering news coverage online made the daily print newspaper's news old by the time the paper was printed the next day. Recognizing this paradigm, legacy newspaper management felt a need to change, and fast so that they would not be rendered obsolete by the deluge of online news proprietors.

Field theory and the group dynamics of newsrooms and changes to the newsroom order

Some of these newspaper newsroom management maladies can be explained with a study of group dynamics. Lewin's field theory (1946) (also see Burnes, 2004) asserted that social groups and not individuals were essential to reducing inherent conflict among groups. When the groups communicated and became accustomed to each other, they gained an inherent empathy, resulting in reduced conflict (Lewin 1946; Burnes, 2004). The environmental reduced conflict became the bedrock foundation that made change possible (Lewin 1946; Burnes, 2004). Newsrooms, however, are conflicted and stressful by their very nature, not just because of the strong personalities of its employees, but because of the fast-paced deadline environment (Lewin 1946; Burnes, 2004).

In the context of the hierarchical newsroom management structure (top-down leadership), whether management wants to openly recognize this paradigm or not, there are two distinct social groups within a newsroom: management and non-management (Gade & Lowrey, 2011). Each group has different parts to play in that organization's success (Kanter, 1983; Gade & Lowrey, 2011). However, one of these groups has more organizational power than the other (Kanter, 1983; Gade & Lowrey, 2011). Therefore, for organizational development – including economics and sustainability – and for successful change to occur, there has to be a felt-need consensus among groups (Adams & McNicholas, 2007; Burnes, 2004; Gade & Lowrey, 2011). Because felt-need literally means that they feel a need to make a change, the onus was placed on the managers – many of who are also involved in the hiring process – to not only make newsroom changes, but to ensure legacy staff buy-in (Pitluk, 2018).

So how does this apply to newsrooms and the organizational change that must occur in order for them to innovate and propagate, which would lead to a felt need of hiring additional staff, including recent journalism school graduates? Or, would it lead to a felt need to hire different types of staff with different types of skills, given the changes in what they want to or have to accomplish? Joseph Schumpeter, a pioneer of innovation research, said that the processes of creativity and innovation leading to the elimination of the established order is known as creative destruction (Storsul & Krumscik, 2013). Regarding journalism, journalists are somewhat hesitant about felt need, and have been reluctant to acknowledge the impact of the digital age and its associated loss of journalism institutional control (Geldens & Marjoribanks, 2015; Singer, 2011). Therefore,

newsroom managers are hesitant to implement creative destruction, since they do not know what the landscape would look like if they were to essentially blow up their current operational order and management structures and start over.

Until the Internet became mainstream, newspaper managers did not have a felt need to change because they had become accustomed to being the agenda setters (Burnes, 2004; Singer, 2011; Geldens & Marjoribanks, 2015). To the extent that they recognized a need to change, journalists were leery about learning a new trick, as it were, because to do so would be to challenge the longstanding hierarchical order and the education they received in journalism school – along with the education of their predecessors (Bennett, 2015; Singer, 2011); to do so would be to challenge the career trajectories they have experienced as a result of hard work in the newsroom with the hopes of being promoted to editor (Gade, 2004; Lowrey & Gade, 2011); to do so would be to violate the longstanding "but-we've-always-done-it-that-way" mentality (Pitluk, 2018).

Essentially, the knowledge base of journalism and of newspapers in particular has changed over the last 20 years, yet the workforce only recently began to change with it (Gade, 2004; Lowrey & Gade, 2011). Part of this new workforce includes college graduates with skill sets not historically found in a traditional newsroom, and those new skill sets like convergence reporting and multimedia newsgathering helped pave a way for newsroom change (Pitluk, 2018; Bennett, 2015; Blom & Davenport, 2012). This study, when applied with Lewin's various theories, speaks critically to both the question of what editors are looking for and why they hire the recent graduates that they do hire.

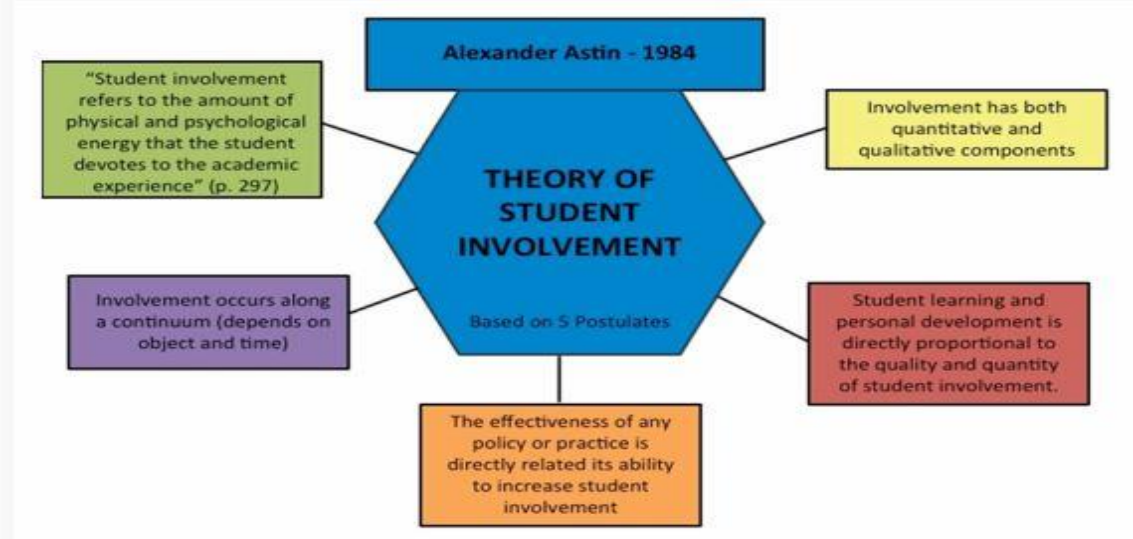
Astin's theory of student involvement

For the academic institution, the theoretical lens through which this study is viewed is Astin's theory of student involvement (Astin, 1984; Braskamp, Trautvetter, & Ward, 2016). This theory states "a particular curriculum, to achieve the effects intended, must elicit sufficient student effort and investment of energy to bring about the desired learning and development" (Astin, 1984, p. 522). This theory concludes that merely exposing students to a litany of classes may or may not work from a pedagogical perspective. Rather, the student must become "involved" in the academic surroundings, which refers to the amount of physical and psychological energy the student exerts on the higher-learning environment, as well as academic experiences (Astin, 1984). As stated in the previous chapter, journalism schools are increasingly focusing on experiential learning because experiential learning exposes students to more than classes. Additionally, experiential learning exposes students to their surroundings and gets them involved in those surroundings.

A highly involved student, Astin said (1984), is one who devotes considerable energy to studying, spends a significant amount of time on campus, participates consistently and actively in student organizations, and interacts frequently with faculty members, staff, and other students (see Figure 6*)*. Conversely, a typically uninvolved student neglects studies, spends as little time as possible on campus, abstains from extracurricular activities, and has infrequent contact with faculty members or other students (Astin, 1984; Braskamp, Trautvetter, & Ward, 2016). Any student who seeks out internships/externships/experiential learning opportunities of campus involvement –

when these learning opportunities are *not* a required part of the curriculum – is thereby applying Astin's theory of student involvement. This study explores student involvement outside of the set journalism school curriculum in order to determine what expressed criteria hiring editors consider in a candidate aside from the academic measures previously researched with quantitative data.

Figure 6: Astin's theory of student involvement



Research questions

This dissertation answers two general research questions, each with three more specific follow-up questions. These questions were broken into additional follow-up questions as the answers to these questions previewed additional usable data during the in-depth interview process.

RQ 1: What are the most important qualities a legacy newspaper hiring editor requires from a recent college graduate new hire?

RQ 1-2: Against and within what master narratives do hiring editors anticipate the industry's needs from recent graduates at this very moment?

RQ 1-3: How important is it for a student to have a lot of depth in research and reporting versus production skills upon graduation?

RQ 1-4: How much weight is placed on extracurricular activities, grades, and internships?

RQ 2: What are the most important tenets and skills that journalism school administrators believe students need to learn by the time they graduate journalism school?

RQ 2-2: By what parallel skills and qualities (grades, participation, outside experience [internships/externships]) do administrators define a successful academic career?

RQ 2-3: What distinguishes academic administrators' graduating students

from those of other programs to make their graduating student attractive to a newspaper hiring editor?

RQ 2-4: What do these parallel skills and qualities say about the collective value that journalism school administrators place on a journalism degree above any other degree that makes a journalism school graduate hirable?

The predominant theory by which this research was structured was grounded theory. The research questions were intentionally broad so that the conversation so that the interviewee could speak freely about the broad topic. (This concept will be explained in Chapter 5.) As a result, and using interview techniques honed through decades as a field reporter, the follow-up questions that stemmed from the original research questions yielded significant amounts of research (which will be disclosed in the forthcoming "results" section) (see Appendix 9 and Appendix 10). Additionally, grounded theory allowed other theories to present themselves to help frame the research, including Lewin's field theory of which group dynamics theory action research theory comprise the suite of Lewin's sociological theories. Additionally, Astin's theory of student involvement, and education theory, surfaced, as did social cognitive theory.

Chapter 5: Methodology

This research was conducted using qualitative in-depth interviewing. Interviewed for this study were selected groups of the two aforementioned stakeholders: legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism school administrators.

Research Design

In-depth interviews are useful as a qualitative method when a researcher wants detailed information about a person's thoughts and behaviors, as well as when the researcher wants to explore new issues in depth (Boyce & Neale, 2006). The in-depth interview questions were semi-structured in order for the researcher to ask follow-up questions predicated on the answers given to the broad research questions. In-depth interviews historically address "what", "how", and "why" questions, and my interview questions fell under this purview. Semi-structured interviews are designed to have a number of prepared interviewer questions prior to the interview, however these questions are designed to be intentionally open so that the interviewer cannot be singularly planned and totally scripted in advance but must be prepared to improvise in a careful and theorized way (Wengraf, 2001). "As regards to such semi-structured interviews, they are ones where research and planning produce a session in which most of the informant's responses can't be predicted in advance and where you as interviewer therefore have to improvise probably half – and maybe 80 percent or more – of your responses to what they say in response to your initial prepared question or questions"

(Wengraf, 2001, p. 5). This method is frequently used in qualitative media research. The semi-structured interviews for this study were modeled on the criteria set forth in research undertaken by Leask, Hooker, and King (2010). They posited that mass media has great potential to influence health-related behaviors and perceptions, and they recognized that significant quantitative research has focused on how the media frames health issues (2010). As a result, their study sought to explore how journalists in Australia select and shape news on health issues. Leask et al. (2010) determined that semi-structured interviews would allow researchers to get the journalists' perceptions of issues relating to health care and health coverage. They interviewed 16 journalists from major Australian print, radio, and television media. Based on results obtained during their semi-structured interviews, Leask et al. (2010) concluded that an awareness of how to work with the media is essential for health communicators to forward healthcare messages to a general audience. Their conclusion was based on results obtained during their semi-structured interviews.

Significant quantitative research exists that supports the conclusions of the work done by Leask et al. (2010) in exploring ongoing changes in journalism education and within the legacy print newspaper industry. My research continues this work in exploring perceptions of academics and journalists on what constitutes the ideal of new hire and establishing the beliefs of administrators about the ways curricula need to change to meet current needs. Semi-structured interviews enable me to explore issues that arose during the conversations in a way that quantitative methods, like survey and factor analysis, would not allow.

Participants/Respondents/Population

Two groups of participants were recruited for this study: Hiring editors at legacy newspapers, and journalism academic administrators who shape the curriculum for their respective college or university journalism program.

The list of newspaper hiring editors chosen for interviews was based on the list of the top 10 newspapers that are succeeding in pioneering newsrooms, advertising growth, and community engagement, according to a 2018 article by Yang and Ruiz in *Editor & Publisher,* as well as the honorable mentions from that year. When all of the newspapers appearing on the 2018 *Editor & Publisher* list was exhausted (with not a sufficient number of editors responding for a qualitative research dissertation), I moved on to *Editor & Publisher*'s corresponding top 10 and honorable mention newspapers for 2017 (Yang & Stroh, 2017). Similarly, when that list was exhausted, I moved on to the 2016 list and its honorable mentions (Yang & Young, 2016). In total, I reached out to the hiring editors at 57 newspapers, received responses from 15, and interviewed 14 (see Appendix 5, Table 1*)*.

*Editor & Publisher'*s lists were chosen because *Editor & Publisher* is a longstanding, reputable industry publication (Picard, 2004; Claussen, 2016). Additionally, reputable scholars like Chandra & Kaiser (2015) and Claussen (2016) also use *Editor & Publisher's* various lists as starting points for their own qualitative research. The reason I chose the most successful newspapers from which to recruit hiring editors to interview was because after a careful review of literature and the

management variances of legacy newspaper newsrooms over the last 20 years, the newspapers identified by *Editor & Publisher* as being at the top of the more than 1,200 daily newspapers nationwide have achieved distinction because their operations are moving in the perceived "right" direction. Moreover, the general lack of industry innovation in response to the internet evolving into a mainstream news platform makes *Editor & Publisher*'s lists of newspapers stand out by comparison. In other words, intrepid journalism school administrators and students might point to these papers as a good career move upon graduation. Additionally, the fact that *Editor & Publisher* has been publishing this top 10 list (as well as honorable mentions) for more than five years illustrates that it has staying power as well as industry and academic buy-in. Without buy-in, the list would discontinue.

The circulations of the newspapers where these 14 editors work vary in size and the papers vary in geographic location. This diversity allowed me to gather feedback across the industry, a benefit that speaks well for the choice of *Editor & Publisher* as a mechanism for choosing interviewees.

On the academy side, the journalism academic administrators I pursued were from the collegefactual.com list of the 2019 Best Journalism Colleges in the United States (2018). There are many lists of journalism school rankings available to a web-searching public, but I chose collegefactual.com's list for three reasons. First, it is the first list that comes up in a web search for "Top Journalism Programs," thereby distinguishing this list as having the highest SEO (Search Engine Optimization) of all journalism school lists. Second, collegefactual.com's published methodology is among

the more sophisticated of all of the other ranking lists. Almost all of the other lists' methodologies cite three factors when determining a college's ranking: education quality, accreditation, and graduate earnings. The collegefactual.com ranking methodology adds a "related major concentration" criteria, which is a measure of how much all of the other majors at the college are related to the particular major (collegefactual.com, 2018). This is important for my study because of the presumption explained in the literature review that a premium is being placed on journalism school graduates with a more interdisciplinary education. The collegefactual.com rankings consider this measure within their related major concentration (mPower Index) (collegefactual.com, 2018). And third, collegefactual.com's list of rankings is the most recent of all the journalism school rankings, allowing for the collection of current data.

People who do the hiring at legacy newspapers approached (a.k.a. hiring editors)

As mentioned in the introduction, the term "hiring editor" is used to describe people who do the hiring at legacy newspapers. Indeed, most legacy newspapers do not have a hiring editor position. Rather, different editors do the hiring – either individually or as part of a committee – depending on a particular publication's policy. For this research, the to-be-mentioned hiring editors were those who either identified themselves as the people who do the hiring when I made contact with the newspaper, or they are the person to whom I was referred when I asked the editor-in-chief, managing editor, or executive editor whom I should interview for this research.

The vetting process to ensure only those editors directly involved with the hiring of recent journalism school graduates began in the first IRB-approved email or phone call (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2). I called newsrooms to ask whom the right hiring editor was that I should speak to, or I contacted either the editor-in-chief, managing editor, or executive editor over email with the same question. Both the oral and written language in the phone call and email stated: "If you agree to participate, I will be asking you to sit for an interview of 45 minutes to an hour. The questions will concern your role in either hiring recent journalism school graduates for their first job out of college, or helping to shape the curriculum in the institution from where the journalism student just graduated." Once that phone call was placed to the newsroom or that email was sent to the newsroom editor-in-chief, managing editor, or executive editor, the newsroom editor either referred me to someone else who does the hiring for their newspaper, or they scheduled an interview with me directly, as they are involved with the hiring process of recent journalism school graduates. Irrespective of the size on the newspaper, every person interviewed for this research is directly involved in the hiring process of recent journalism school graduates. Many times, a candidate will interview with multiple editors in a newsroom, and then the newsroom will collectively render their decision (with the editor-in-chief, publisher, or other executive having the final say). In the event that no singular person makes the hiring decisions at the participating newspapers (which is sometimes the case at larger dailies), a voting member of the hiring team participated in this research. Regarding the editor-in-chiefs who

participated, as the top editor at a publication, he or she ultimately has final say as to who is hired.

I selected the hiring editors based on the 2016-2018 *Editor & Publisher* articles (Yang & Ruiz) and began by contacting institutions on the 2018 list. All listed editors were contacted by email twice, the first with the initial query to participate in this research study, and the second notification, when necessary, reminded them that they were contacted earlier, usually between 5-to-9 days after the first email was sent, to see if they were interested in participating.

After two efforts of contacting the editors from the 2018 *Editor & Publisher* list, I moved on to the 2017 *Editor & Publisher* list and again employed the two-email rule of setting up interviews with the editors in Appendix 5, Table 1 (Yang & Stroh, 2017). Approximately two weeks after soliciting the editors from that 2017 list, I reached out to the 2016 *Editor & Publisher* list and was able to complete my list of interview subjects (Yang & Young, 2016).

Those who participated have been indicated by their name highlighted in green ink, while those who never responded remain in black ink. One editor responded and declined to participate, indicated by red ink. All interviews were conducted over either Skype, FaceTime, or the telephone. Interviewees were given the choice of their preferred method of interview.

According to the article (Yang & Ruiz, 2018):

> This year's list of 10 Newspapers That Do It Right once again recognizes some of the biggest and brightest ideas taking place in our industry right now. These ideas range from successful digital innovations, strategies that helped cut costs, and revenue ideas that increased the bottom line. Despite any setbacks and challenges that come at them, these 10 newspapers and the ones listed in our honorable mentions are hopeful for a brighter and stronger future. We hope these ideas will also push your newsroom to growth and prosperity.

Journalism schools approached

According to collegefactual.com (2018):

> There are approximately 13,890 students graduating with a degree in Journalism every year. This helps make it 38th most in-demand from the 384 total college majors we have data on. Journalism is ranked 87 out of 121 college majors for graduate pay. This means it is around the low end for salary potential, but you can improve your chances of a high-paying career by finding a superior school and pursuing an advanced degree (Collegefactual.com, 2018).

Table 2 (see Appendix 6) indicates the best journalism schools per collegefactual.com, including the location, starting salaries after graduation, and the

deans/department directors/chairs. My approach to deans and/or journalism program directors/chairs of these schools was similar to my approach to newspaper hiring editors: I contacted them by email and asked them if they would be willing to participate in my research. When I did not receive the requisite number of interviews to reach saturation based on collegefactual.com's top 10 list, I continued with collegefactual.com's rankings, which goes up to 184. (University of Oklahoma, 21st on the list, is my own institution, so it was eliminated from consideration in order to avoid a conflict of interest.) These college/universities appear in the order they were ranked by collegefactual.com, which was also the order in which I contacted them.

In much the same manner that hiring editors were approached, the vetting process to ensure only those academic administrators directly involved with the shaping of journalism curricula began in the first IRB-approved email or phone call (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2). I called journalism schools to ask whom the right academic administrator was that I should speak to, or I contacted either the dean or the director of the journalism sequence over email. Both the oral and written language in the phone call and email stated: "If you agree to participate, I will be asking you to sit for an interview of 45 minutes to an hour. The questions will concern your role in either hiring recent journalism school graduates for their first job out of college, or helping to shape the curriculum in the institution from where the journalism student just graduated."

Once that phone call was placed to the dean's office or that email was sent to the dean or journalism program director, the dean or director either referred me to someone else who is involved in shaping the journalism curricula, or they scheduled an interview with me directly, as they are involved with which classes are offered and when.

I reached out to the administrators of the top 70 journalism schools/programs requesting an interview by either Skype, FaceTime, or telephone. The original intention was for all interviews to be either in-person or over Skype or FaceTime. However, the deeper I ventured into the list, I refined my interviewing method and gave the choice of telephone in the event that the Skype or FaceTime methods were off-putting for the interviewees. Of the 70 administrators I contacted, 16 interviews were conducted, indicated by green ink. Two administrators agreed to do interviews and then did not return repeated follow-up phone calls and/or email follow-ups, and they are notated in purple highlight.

All listed academic administrators were contacted by email twice, the first with the initial query to participate in this research study, and the second reminding them that they were contacted earlier (usually between 5-to-9 days after first email was sent) to see if they were interested in participating. After I made two efforts of contacting the academic administrators in waves of 20, I moved to the next 20. I stopped after 70 because I reached saturation. For full transparency, the email used to solicit academic administrators was the same one used for all 70. The IRB-approved scripts for email and telephone solicitation are in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

Materials

As this is a qualitative study, the materials I used are those that make interviewing and transcribing most user-friendly. I used an iPhone for some interviews and a digital recording device for others. Depending on where I conducted the interviews (home, work, or school) determined which device I used. I also typed notes while the interviewee was talking to highlight key points that I wanted to be sure to draw out in the "results" section.

According to Saldaña (2015), transcription is an essential element of checking the progress of research analysis while still in the field. These interviews were transcribed within hours of the actual interview. Transcription occurred through repetitive reading and listening, and then I went over each interview as I transcribed them a second and sometimes a third time to make sure nothing was missed. A lone researcher, such as the case with this dissertation, can benefit most from three recommendations as prescribed by Saldaña (2015). First, the lone researcher is to check his or her interpretations with the participants themselves. I reiterated key points throughout the interviews with the participants, as I was taking notes and highlighting key points throughout the interviews. Second, the lone researcher is to maintain a reflective journal on the research project with copious analytic memos (Saldaña, 2015).

After each interview was transcribed, I made a log with the person's key points for each of the research questions. I also summed up the various skills they accented, the model on which they base their curriculum (for the academic administrators), whether they are accredited and if that matters to their program (for the academic administrators), and key quotes. It is from these key quotes, usually the result of more in-depth follow-up questions, that additional points arose. Third, I coded simultaneously with the transcribed data (Saldaña, 2015), then I reread the transcripts several times to make sure I caught everything.

Regarding the transcription itself, I focused on the actual words and omitted the "uhs" and "ers" and "mmms." According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), transcription can be done at different levels of detail, and it is dependent on the knowledge and skill of the transcribing person whether or not to include these superfluous speech patterns or to omit them. I also emailed all of the quotes that I used to that particular interviewee and allowed them to accuracy check and, if necessary, change their wording. Finally, I had an independent third party, Jackie Froeber, former editor-in-chief of *Celebrated Living* magazine, read the transcription reports.

Procedures for gathering data

The plan was to interview a range of five to 10 hiring editors of legacy newspapers with established programs for hiring journalism students upon graduation

from college, as well as interviewing five to 10 journalism school administrators to determine which skills and tenets they believe need to be instilled in a student upon graduation. This study was originally set to recruit a range between five to 10 because qualitative in-depth interviewing, in the quest to uncover the most in-depth coverage of a subject, focuses on depth of data collection rather than breadth in terms of sample size, "even if this means focusing the study on certain parts of the population rather than achieving a more broadly defined sample" (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013, p. 135).

There is no consensus among qualitative research scholars regarding how many interviews are enough for in-depth qualitative research, but most scholars maintain that a range of interviews is necessary to reach saturation (Dworkin, 2012). Saturation is defined as the point at which the data collection process no longer offers any new or relevant data and when the answers become iterative (Mason, 2010). In one of the more highly cited articles, Morse (1995) said that saturation occurs when researchers cease data collection because they have enough data to build a comprehensive and convincing theory. As far as the number of sources is concerned, Yin recommends at least six sources of evidence (Marshall, 2013). Creswell recommends no more than four or five cases in a case study (2013).

Because there is no overriding consensus among scholars, and based on the recommendations of my committee, I conducted interviews for this study until I deemed it to have reached saturation, which should have happened between the range of five-to-10 interviews per subject area. I started to see saturation at around seven to eight

interviews. However, as I had reached out to a number of potential participants in the beginning, and because it was not easy to find participants from the various groups because of their busy schedules and a perceived hesitation to commit to an hour-long interview (sometimes longer), I conducted in-depth interviews with every principal who agreed to sit for an interview. The final tally was: Hiring editors, 14; Academic administrators: 16. As such, I went beyond the minimum and collected substantially more data than was necessary.

These in-depth interviews were conducted over either Skype/FaceTime, or on the telephone, depending on the interviewees preference, and all sessions were recorded. All interviews of hiring editors were conducted between December 3, 2018, and December 27, 2018. All interviews of academic administrators occurred between December 4, 2018, and January 14, 2019.

The qualitative data was analyzed using repetitive reading and coding. I used the data from my research to help explain whether or not there is an overriding issue in contemporary journalism as it pertains to what is being taught in school and what the industry demands are, and I did so by detecting patterns where they exist and doing a deep dive into suggestions not previously identified in prior research. I gained either oral or written consent, depending on the medium by which I was able to contact the particular participant. Both approaches are scripted (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2), and both have received IRB approval.

The interviews varied in length depending on the particular person being interviewed and his or her schedule. I stated at the onset that interviews would not be longer than one hour so that there was a maximum time limit by which the interviewee could monitor his or her time (Tracy, 2012). I facilitated the interviews and kept the interviewees on topic by reiterating the reason for this study and my commitment to the topic both as a media practitioner and as an aspiring scholar. According to Marshall and Rossman (2014), a good interview will include through discourse the researcher's standpoint and his or her personal significance with the topic and of the study, including the reasons for choosing the topic, presuppositions, previous experience with the topic, the setting, and an expression of hope or expectation that the study will somehow contribute by changing knowledge assumptions and/or solving a societal challenge. I informed all interviewees – the hiring editors and academic administrators alike – that my desire to explore this topic comes from a position on both sides of the proverbial aisle, as I am both a former hiring editor and an academic who has worked as a journalism adjunct professor before taking my current position as an academic administrator. I communicated to them my desire to explore the intersection of industry wants and university teachings and my desire to see whether a current conversation was occurring between the industry and the academy in terms of curriculum exploration or industry nuance.

Analysis

As part of the iterative process, after the completion of each interview, I transcribed and analyzed my interviews using repetitive listening and reading to identify themes and to transcribe recordings. I took notes while this occurred so that I could begin grouping patterns and various key terms for analysis.

In the analysis, I focused on the relevant theoretical concerns or issues, and used those going forward into successive interviews as a way of "testing" out their relevance to the overall research question.

Once the interviews were transcribed, I analyzed and coded using Altheide and Schneider's (1996) 12-step process of qualitative document analysis. The 12 steps are:

(1) Pursue a specific problem.

(2) Become familiar with the process and context of the information source (e.g., in-depth, semi-structured interviews). Explore possible sources (transcribed documents) of information.

(3) Become familiar with several (six to 10) examples of relevant documents, noting particularly the format. Selecting unit of analysis (e.g., each article), which may change.

(4) Lists several items or categories (variables) to guide data collection and draft the protocol (data collection sheet).

(5) Test the protocol by collecting data from several documents.

(6) Revise the protocol and select several additional cases to further refine the protocol.

(7) Arrive at a sampling rationale and strategy -- for example, theoretical, opportunistic, cluster, stratified random. (Note: This will usually be theoretical sampling.)

(8) Collect the data, using present codes, if appropriate, and many descriptive examples. Keep the data with the original documents, but also enter data into computer-text word processing format for easier search and find text coding. About halfway to two thirds through the sample, examine the data to permit emergence, refinement, or collapsing of additional categories. Make appropriate adjustments to other data. Complete data collection.

(9) Perform data analysis, including conceptual refinement and data coding. Read notes and data repeatedly and thoroughly.

(10) Compose and contrast extremes and key differences within each category or item. Make textual notes. Write brief summaries or overviews of data for each category (variable).

(11) Combine the brief summaries with an example of the typical case as well as the extremes. Illustrate with materials form the protocol(s) for each case. Note surprises and curiosities about these cases and other materials and in your data.

(12) Integrate the findings with your interpretation of key concepts in another draft.

Verification strategies for establishing reliability and validity

Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, and Spiers (2002) said that while all research must have "truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality" in order to be considered worthwhile, the nature of knowledge within the quantitative (rationalistic) paradigm is different from the knowledge and the qualitative (naturalistic) paradigm" (p.15). *Verification* is the process of checking, confirming, making sure, and being certain. In qualitative research, verification refers to the mechanisms used during the process of research to incrementally contribute to ensuring reliability and validity, as well as the rigor of the study (Morse et al., 2002). The analytical work of the investigator ensures effectiveness (Morse et al., 2002).

Within the conduct of my inquiry, the verification strategies used to ensure both reliability and validity of data were activities such as ensuring methodological coherence, sampling sufficiency, developing a dynamic relationship between sample link, data collection and analysis, thinking critically, and theory development (Morse et al., 2002). A good portion of reliability relies on picking an appropriate sample, which consists of participants who best represent or have knowledge of my research topic, ensuring "efficient and effective saturation of categories, with optimal quality data and minimum dross" (Morse et al., 2002, p. 18).

Codes indicate a specific system of labeling that assign a specific meaning to the descriptive information being mined in an interview (Miles et al., 2014). Codes are

primarily used to categorize information and data chunks so that the research can more easily and readily find them (Miles et al., 2014). Tellingly, codes are assigned to data chunks to assess reoccurring patterns (2014). According to Saldaña (2015), coding is divided into two major stages: First Cycle and Second Cycle coding. First Cycle coding is assigned to the data chunks that are determined through repetitive reading and transcription (2015). Second Cycle generally occurs within the resulting First Cycle codes, as it is a more invasive, closer look at the ensuing patterns (2015). According to Saldaña (2015), First Cycle coding can include up to 25 different approaches, yet the researcher need not stick with any one approach. These approaches can be mixed and matched.

The two coding approaches I used in the First Cycle were descriptive coding and In Vivo coding. Descriptive coding assigns labels to data to summarize in a word or a short phrase the prevailing topic of a passage (Miles et al., 2014). In Vivo coding uses words and/or short phrases from the participants own language in the data record (Miles et al., 2014). Once I thoroughly exhausted my First Cycle of coding, I transitioned to my Second Cycle of coding, whereby I grouped my First Cycle summaries into a smaller number of categories, themes, and constructs (Miles et al., 2014). What ensued were pattern codes, which are explanatory codes that identify an emergent theme, configuration, or explanation (Miles et al., 2014). Because all of my interviewees from both the industry and the academy agreed to be identified on the record, I have identified them by their name and publication/academic institution, and not by an alias or a number. I also emailed all of the quotes I used in this dissertation to the respective

sources for their approval and augmentation. All quotes were cut and pasted into the body of an email from the independently verified transcripts.

As Shenton (2004) posits, trustworthiness of qualitative research can be ensured when investigators attempt to demonstrate that a true picture of the phenomenon under scrutiny is being presented. Qualitative researchers should strive to enable a future investigator to repeat the study (Guba, 1981). A determining way to establish trustworthiness is to achieve confirmability (Guba, 1981; Shenton, 2004). In order to achieve confirmability, researchers must take steps to demonstrate that findings emerge from the data and not their own predispositions (Shenton, 2004).

Four components measure the quality of the research, according to Potter (1996): internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity. That explanation is expanded upon by Lincoln and Guba (1985) when they explicate that qualitative research must consider four additional terms that are better suited to qualitative paradigms: credibility, transferability, dependability, and trustworthiness.

Credibility refers to the "degree to which findings correctly map the phenomenon in question" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 186). Transferability occurs when the results of the research can be generalized to situations in comparable situation (Denzin & Lincoln,1998). As the researcher, my job is to provide sufficient descriptions of the case under study. As such, a reader interested in understanding the case will be able to decide if the research is transferable among similar settings. Confirmability relates to the process (in this case, intersection) of the "residue or records" that ensue as

the researcher gathers materials (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 319). Member checks can verify the findings. And utility means the usefulness of the study to scholars and practitioners/hiring editors (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

This study practiced member checks to help verify the findings. I used the member check system of credibility and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this method, I took the findings back to the individuals who I interviewed to verify that what I had compiled was an accurate reflection of what they expressed and said in the interview (1985).

Reflexivity

The critical self-reflective process of the ways the researcher's background, assumptions, positioning, and behavior impact the research process is called reflexivity (Finlay & Gough, 2008). Throughout the researching and interviewing process, I framed the content through the lens of objectivity. This is a tenet of the grounded theory approach, whereby data are allowed to emerge without judgment, prejudice, or interference (Finlay & Gough, 2008; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

When coding and analyzing the data, I focused my attention on the content of the data and not on the predilections of peers or contemporaries or professors, past or present. This enabled me to minimize my own assumptions and positions on the two groups of actors: hiring editors and academic administrators, and it allowed me to

divorce myself from the widely popularized narrative – real and perceived – between these two groups that there is a disconnect (Lynch, 2015). This presumption was confirmed during the research.

Although I have been a professional practitioner of legacy newspaper journalism at *Village Voice Media* and *Dallas Morning News,* as well as an adjunct professor of journalism at the University of Texas at Arlington and the University of North Texas for more than 15 years, my current role as a graduate student requires that I be an objective researcher with the training and background to distance myself from my interviewees and maintain an objective position.

The researcher went to great lengths to ensure that the proper groups of hiring editors and journalism academic administrators were selected for this dissertation. Every single hiring editor appearing in this research has a direct hand in the hiring process at his or her newspaper. Similarly, every single journalism academic administrator in this research has a direct hand in the choosing and formation of journalism curricula. The participants were screened from the very first email and/or phone call to guarantee that the right people were participating in this research (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2).

The researcher also went above and beyond the required interviews needed for saturation by interviewing twice as many people as needed (once saturation was met). This ensured that there would be no questions regarding whether a large enough sample size was pulled from the population of legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism

academic administrators. All of the findings were independently verified by third parties, and all of the interviewees had the opportunity to review and augment their quotes.

Chapter 6: Results, legacy newspaper hiring editor interviews

The results of this research help to clarify the various skills and behavioral characteristics the sample of hiring editors at legacy newspapers are looking for, as well as what skills and behavioral characteristics the sample of academic administrators are instilling in their students. The results of this chapter serve as a snapshot to record which direction the hiring editors in the industry believe newspaper journalism is currently in and where it is moving. The results also help to paint the picture of the future of legacy newspaper journalism which, by proxy, helps to paint the picture of the job landscape in legacy newspaper journalism in the future. (A summary table of the findings from these interviews can be seen in the table below and found in Appendix 11, Table 5.)

Major Theme	**Minor Theme**	**Applicable Quote**
100% of legacy newspaper hiring editors interviewed said that writing & reporting skills are most important quality of journalism school graduates, and that those qualities have waned over the last decade	Other editors expressed a desire that students have a variety of secondary skills, like video, photography, coding, and social media skills. All of the editors, however, said those were second to writing and reporting	**"**I'm finding that a lot of the schools are skipping over the basics and teaching them all about social media and how to market themselves. They're forgetting to teach them how to write a story and investigate a story." – *Jeremy McBain, Petoskey News-Review*
100% of legacy newspaper hiring editors interviewed said internships/externships and clips were most important quality of journalism school graduates	50% said clips and come from the student newspaper, and 50% said experience of journalism school graduates can be from the student newspaper	"Internships are number one and everything else is a distant second. One thing I tell students a lot is to get involved in their college papers." –

		Audrey Cooper, *San Francisco Chronicle*
85% of legacy newspaper hiring editors interviewed said curiosity//adaptability/motivation was among the most important qualities of a recent journalism school graduate	Another recurring theme among hiring editors is that the students coming out are well read and up-to-date on current events. Less than 30% said knowing a second language is mandatory	**"**Curiosity is the only quality that will keep a career journalist in the game. A desire to ask questions; a spark of curiosity that has to be at the core of a younger journalist." –Thomas Huang, *Dallas Morning News*
More than 50% of legacy newspaper hiring editors interviewed said they do not have time to train recent journalism school graduate new-hires, and that they need to be ready to hit the ground running	Other desired competencies are learning on the fly, adapting to a newspaper's individual style guidelines, and assuming any professional posture or presence of the newspaper	"They may have great potential, but we don't have the manpower anymore to take a chance. We have to make the right hire early on." – Mark Baldwin, *Register Star*
All of the hiring editors said writing and reporting skills are more important than production skills, although knowing production skills, they said, makes you more marketable	50% of hiring editors said that students need to have production skills and other interdisciplinary skills to round out their aptitude	**"**Communication is a big one, and I consider that a production skill because they need to be able to communicate the topic regardless of the platform." – Andi Petrini, *Daily Press*

Moreover, an unforeseen byproduct that presented itself by the very nature of a semi-structured qualitative interview is that both hiring editors and academic administrators alike point to a disconnect that exists between the industry and the academy. This is important because as indicated in the literature review, both legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism academic administrators speak about a perceived disconnect, and that one does not monitor or, worse still, care what the other

is doing. At least one newspaper editor said he believed the academy does not care about the newspaper industry anymore because they are a fading medium. Yet there has been no research to show empirically that a disconnect does indeed exist, until now.

It is important to consider that there are three degrees of communication at play for every newspaper story that the news-consuming public examines. First, to the news consumer or newspaper subscriber in contemporary American society, the expectation is that all of the people writing and reporting the news in their newspapers have the best educational pedigree, social responsibility, and ethical consideration, and that they come from the best journalism programs in the best colleges and universities across the country. Second, the belief of the newspaper reader is that because of the education of their newspaper's reporters, everything they are reading is thorough, comprehensive, fair, and accurate. Third, regardless of where the newspaper reporter graduated from college, there was an underlying responsibility of that journalism school to have trained that reporter to fairly, accurately, and eloquently present the news to the news consuming public. Based on this three-pronged supposition, it would not be wrong to assume that there is an assembly line-like structure that transports students from journalism school to the newsroom while supervisors from both the academy and the industry maintaining a watchful eye to ensure historic protocols are met and standards brought to bear. However, the reader of this research will soon see that even though the assembly line-like delivery system of students from college to the newsroom is still in working order, the two operators of the academic component and the practitioner

component are relying on past successes to keep the machine running and are not necessarily speaking with each other about the future.

All participants from both the legacy newspapers (n=14) as well as academic administrators (deans/directors/chairs (n=16)) agreed to participate in this qualitative study and all of them gave permission to be identified by name and publication/academic institution. Similarly, all of the participants agreed that their information would be identified in this research and that all or part of their transcripts could be published and cited in this study.

The results section is framed by way of the initial research questions. In addition to revealing the percentages of various respondents' answers, I also highlighted valuable research highlights that resulted from careful analysis of the interviews in order to aptly demonstrate key components of answers that represent the prevailing wisdom and common sentiment of the group.

Additionally, it is worth noting the collective reach/circulation of the newspapers represented in this study because of the high volume of readership and traffic these newspapers elicit. Many readers in different markets across the United States are affected by personnel changes at their local newspaper, which in turn affects how they perceive their news. Of the editors interviewed, their newspaper's combined daily circulation is more than 1.1 million, and the combined Sunday circulation is more than 1.5 million. Of the 14 legacy newspaper hiring editors interviewed, 78 percent represented major newspaper chains. The final breakout of represented newspapers in

this research were: Gannett (3); Hearst (3); Tribune (2); HateHouse (2); Lee (1); Village Voice Media (1); Belo (1); Maine Today Media (1) (see Appendix 5).

Organizationally, the results section is structured by research question. Each subheading is a restatement of the corresponding research question so that the information is presented in chronological order, preparing the reader for an answer to the research question. Examples of interview questions that were asked of respondents in addition to the four broad eight broad research questions can be found in Appendix 9 (legacy newspaper hiring editors) and Appendix 10 (journalism academic administrators).

The most important qualities a legacy newspaper hiring editor requires from a recent college graduate new hire

All 14 hiring managers from all 14 newspapers, the daily circulations of which ranged from 9,000 on the low end (*Petoskey News-Review*) to 327,000 on the high end (*San Francisco Chronicle),* pointed to writing and reporting as being the most important qualities of a recent journalism school graduate new-hire. Editors like Jeremy McBain from the *Petoskey News-Review* and Mark Baldwin from the *Register Star* in Rockford, Illinois (30,000 circulation daily; 40,000 Sunday), expressed opinions that were representative of all hiring editors when they say that over time, they have witnessed a decreased focus on writing and reporting on the part of journalism schools as they implemented more technology and social media platforms into their curriculum.

McBain, much like his contemporaries at larger publications, felt that the students applying for jobs right out of college have lost what Ohio University Scripps School of Journalism Dean Scott Titsworth calls the "grassroots, blue-collar writing and reporting skills" that made local papers the go-to sources of news and information. McBain said that regardless of the sophistication of the writing produced by a recent journalism school graduate in his or her first newsroom job, historically, the editor could at least count on the reporting competency of the neophyte to ensure accurate storytelling. The writing craft and a distinct writing style, he said, although difficult to teach, would come out osmotically with practice and time. Additionally, he believed that availability of news online does not in itself mean that the news is accurate and that the news is credible. In part, he said you have to consider the source of the news as much as you have to consider who is producing it, meaning that although newspapers are struggling, the dissemination of news is hitting a fevered pitch. As such, the newspapers that have earned the trust of readers over the years – in part because of their reporters and editors – are losing readership market share to outlets that have neither been thoroughly vetted nor have they an established history of accuracy and reliability. Most of these new sources that readers are visiting instead of their local newspaper are online publications. McBain also said that while the web does afford an immediacy to news that print does not, the web has yet to distinguish itself as a medium that adequately assesses and evaluates those who are producing the news online. As a result, McBain believes that the public and other media outlets will continue to refer to the

local newspapers for breaking news and in-depth reporting as the lesser-trained online outlets expose themselves as having a lower reliability standard.

> First of all, they [recent journalism school graduates] have to have the basics. I'm finding that a lot of the schools are skipping over the basics and teaching them all about social media and how to market themselves. They're forgetting to teach them how to write a story and investigate a story. They need that information in order to be a good journalist. Readers are demanding high quality. - Jeremy McBain, *Petoskey* (Michigan) *News-Review*

By "the basics" McBain is referring to those blue-collar writing and reporting skills that he had come to expect from recent journalism school new-hires over the years, but that he believes are now overshadowed by nuanced technical skills. He recognizes that his point of view might come across as old fashioned, but he said that it is those basic old-fashioned writing and reporting skills that distinguished his and other community newspapers as go-to sources of accurate news and information.

Mark Baldwin from the *Register Star* in Rockford, Illinois, agreed with McBain's sentiment that the ability to write and report with any authority or credibility starts with a love not for the technological delivery mechanisms of the news, but with a love for the news itself. He said that although an affinity for the news may seem like a

given, students must realize that technology is a tool for disseminating the news, and not an end in itself.

> I'm going to sound old school, but they [recent journalism school graduates] have to have a love of the news. I will draw an insidious comparison: Too many of them are in love with technology and not as much with the news because of what they learned in school and what they've been exposed to. That is not a recipe for success. If they don't love the news, they won't stick with it. Secondarily, they have to be able to write better from Day 1 than when I graduated 40 years ago because there are fewer editors to hold their hands now than there were. They need to know and love and understand the news. – Mark Baldwin, *Register Star*

While writing and reporting appeared in 100 percent of the respondents' answers either as the most sought-after skill set or as one of the top three attractive qualities, 85 percent of the 14 legacy hiring editors (n=12) said that either curiosity, inquisitiveness, adaptability, or some sort of self-motivating cognitive quality was among the highest required skill sets. Thomas Huang of the *Dallas Morning News* said that "human qualities" are of paramount importance. The coded words in this instance were curiosity, inquisitive, and adapt.

> Technology and the way that we select the news is changing so quickly that any journalist starting out today will be doing something different a few years from

> now. Journalists starting out today will be using different tools and software and need to be able to adapt quickly. Resilience and inquisitiveness are important qualities. Curiosity is the only quality that will keep a career journalist in the game. A desire to ask questions; a spark of curiosity that has to be at the core of a younger journalist. –Thomas Huang, *Dallas Morning News*

The expressions "self-motivating cognitive qualities" and "human qualities" are meant to exemplify innate curiosity and social understanding that Huang and others believe are paramount qualities in any recent journalism school graduate. A person who exhibits self-motivating cognitive qualities is a person who wants to learn everything about everything (Maddux, 2016). The human qualities Huang alludes to are the qualities that make people inherently compassionate and empathetic to the human condition (Maddux, 2016). These qualities cannot necessarily be taught in journalism school, but they can be honed and if the student is already predisposed to a benevolent disposition, which Huang believes most journalism school students are, then the proper mix of sympathy and skepticism can be improved by journalism school.

The *Dallas Morning* News' Huang, who is the Assistant Managing Editor as well as a hiring editor, believes that although the *Morning News* usually requires some real-world experience after journalism school before joining their ranks, the recent graduates of contemporary times will need to have multimedia tools, but like more than 70 percent of hiring editors interviewed (n=10), being skilled in digital tools or social media is not the most important skill set for a hiring manager. "In terms of journalist

abilities, a lot has been invested in terms of technology and tools and helping students learn how to do multimedia, whether it's video or data related tools, and I think that's important but I don't know that you have to have that because you learn a lot of that stuff in newsrooms," Huang said. That sentiment of on-the-job learning of multimedia tools was echoed by seven other newspaper hiring editors, or 57 percent of respondents.

Other skills that averaged a score of more than 50 percent of respondents included investigative reporting skills (n=9), business skills (n=8), and ethics (n=7). There were no other majority patterns of "most important skills", indicated by those skills hiring editors considered in their top-three must-have skills from recent journalism school graduates.

Another response regarding desired skills that a newspaper hiring editor expects from a recent journalism school graduates are a set of core competencies that cannot necessarily be tested but that can only be exhibited in real-world situations. An important finding is that sixty-four percent of hiring editors (n=9) brought up – unprompted – the idea of undetectable core competencies that cannot be screened for but must be revealed in the pursuit of a story. According to nine hiring managers who raised this point organically during the progression of the in-depth interviewing conversation, when it comes to localized style guidelines or internal hard-or-software, hiring editors do not have time to educate their new hires other than a topical introduction to the material. That is because while newspaper employees are willing to impart their collective institutional knowledge on new-hires (both recent journalism school graduates or new hires from other outlets), the employees expect adaptability to

be a top principle in a colleague. Additionally, the expectation is that new hires will hit the ground running and need little to no hand-holding, other than to learn localized style guidelines. As such, the core competencies are learning on the fly, adapting to a newspaper's individual style guidelines, and assuming any professional posture or presence of the newspaper in the community without the neophyte overstepping his or her bounds.

Upon further questioning, Baldwin with the *Register Star* said that his newsroom, like many local newspapers across the country, is not growing in numbers. On the contrary, his newsroom, like many newspaper newsrooms, is shrinking and many positions are being consolidated. Accordingly, everyone hired is expected to perform multiple tasks. As a result, since Baldwin and his team are also performing multiple roles, neither he nor his team members have the time to teach a new hire something he/she is expected to already know. These assumed skills of the new hire include writing, reporting, public record sourcing, interviewing techniques, and the determination of when a story is ready to be submitted to the editor prior to publication. This ideology is more apropos for recent journalism school new hires than it is for people who are hired from within the industry. That is because someone already working for a legacy newspaper has a lay of the land and knows how a professional newsroom operates. Most journalism school new-hires, unless they had extensive internship/externship/experiential learning exposure to professional newsrooms while in college, are not aware of the intricate workings of a professional newsroom.

> We can teach them, but if a newcomer to the industry is not a strong, solid writer from Day One, he or she will not thrive. Actually, they won't even get in the door. We do not have the depth of editing that we used to have anymore. They [recent journalism school graduates] may have great potential, but we don't have the manpower anymore to take a chance. We have to make the right hire early on. They [educators] have to do a better job of not passing graduates who are not ready. – Mark Baldwin, *Register Star*

Baldwin hit on an important point which helps to clarify the sentiment of hit-the-ground-running. A hiring editor having an expectation that a recent journalism school graduate new-hire be able to fit right in and start producing news copy on Day One is not a new concept. What is a new concept is the implied system of rewards. Baldwin submits that those recent hires that demonstrate a self-motivating disposition – and the aptitude to boot – will be the ones who not only succeed in the 21st century newspaper newsroom, but who will garnish the most attention and receive the most training. This differs from the past in the sense that the learning curve had a much longer arc when the newsroom had more employees. Similarly, the morale among employees when newsrooms had a larger staff was much more conducive to the training and development of recent journalism school graduate new-hires because those employees had time to devote to the coaching process. That time and commitment to development fell by the wayside as newsrooms began laying off personnel and adding responsibilities to the remaining reporters' job descriptions. It is almost a Darwinian, survival-of-the-

fittest posture for newsroom new-hires: Prove your worth, and you'll be accepted by the pack. Fail and you're out.

Another important finding that came out of question one, the intentionally broad-based, getting-to-know-you question, was that the responding editors were eager to talk about the subject of recent journalism school graduate new-hires, and about the significance of journalism schools in general at this particular moment and place in time. Those hiring editors who answered the request for a 45-minute to one-hour interview expressed an interest in conveying their opinion about the need for solid writers and reporters coming out of journalism school, but a good cross section of them believed that this automatic expectation of journalism education, according to 11 out of 14 editors, was not so automatic anymore. One editor in particular, Matthew Miller from the *State Journal* in Lansing, Michigan (41,000 daily, 66,000 Sunday) made a good tongue-in-cheek comment about reporting and writing that served as a proper example of how this first broad research question transitioned into another research question that fleshed out in more detail what good writing and reporting meant to them.

> I want to see at the very least a bit of complexity in the way they frame stories. I want writers who can work with an issue that has more than two sides, who can handle ambiguity. I want to see evidence that they know what they don't know. I want people who are curious, broadly interested in the world around them. Good writers are nice, too. – Matthew Miller, *State Journal*

This analysis by Miller acknowledges that there is little room for inexperience on the part of recent journalism school graduates, even though that person does lack professional experience. Indeed, Miller and his peers recognize that a recent graduate will not have the newsroom capability or acumen of a seasoned reporter, however, in the same manner that any cost hikes beyond a corporation's control get passed on to the consumer, the short-handedness of a newsroom and the unwavering need for consistent copy gets passed on to the new hire. That new hire, experienced or not, must learn on the job so seamlessly that it is as if they already knew what they were doing with a measure of sophistication on day-one.

An unpredicted collective response of the hiring editors was that the intangible qualities – adaptability, curiosity, hit-the-ground-running – were as sought after as the tangible qualities like writing, reporting, research, and presentation. The intangible qualities are not necessarily the hallmarks of only journalism students. Rather, these qualities are most likely sought after by hiring managers in any industry.

Another unexpected and important finding concerns the silence on the part of hiring editors for wanting recent graduate new hires with reader-enticing skills. Something that was left out of the hiring editors' responses was a majority request for any reader attention-grabbing skills like descriptive headline writing or any additional click-bait attracting skills that would drive readership metrics up. Presumably, a web-savvy recent graduate new hire would have learned those contemporary techniques in journalism school. While they may have an understanding of expectations and even of

techniques from internships/externships/experiential learning, the responses from the hiring editors do not indicate that web-specific tasks or advanced social media skills are required of a new hire.

Hiring editors' anticipations of industry needs from recent graduates at this moment in time and in the future

The following research question allowed hiring editors, all of whom assumed their leadership role after at least a decade in a newsroom, to express their predictions as to where the legacy newspaper industry is heading. Moreover, with this research question, hiring editors were asked to predict what roles they feel recent journalism school graduate new hires will play in the future as well as the role they are currently playing in American newsrooms: "As hiring editor at newspapers considered by your peers to be on the uptick, what do you anticipate the industry needing from recent graduates at the very moment?"

This question did not yield any across-the-board consistency like the previous skills question. The presumption for this question was that because journalism schools have made such massive efforts to incorporate social media classes and writing for the web as part of the journalism curriculum, answers would have involved a digital or social media component regarding what the industry anticipates and expects from recent journalism school graduate new hires. However, while different editors had different expectations, only one editor out of 14 said he expects students to bring with them a

significant measure of digital and social media savvy that the newsroom legacy stalwarts do not have.

Through coding, I grouped answers that pointed in the direction of a recent journalism school graduate having multiple skill sets other than writing and reporting. When an editor mentioned a skill set other than writing and reporting, I grouped those other skill sets together to get a population of 12 out of 14 hiring editors, or 86 percent. Those other skill sets and terms were: business reporting (3 editors), photography (3 editors), investigative reporting (3 editors), multi-media skills (2 editors), team reporting (1 editor). Collectively, these skills very closely match the contemporary curriculum taught in journalism schools across the country, including the ones that appeared in this research. However, the answers, when juxtaposed with the previous question about most important skills, demonstrate that editors do not believe journalism schools are teaching enough basic writing and reporting skills and that they are teaching too much social media and digital web writing. Yet on the other hand, when asked what sort of skills the industry expects/demands from recent graduate new hires at this moment in time, those same hiring editors pointed to disciplines that are, in fact, the tried-and-true staples of journalism education.

The first subject was raised by Eric Larsen, the news editor and a hiring editor at the 12,700-circulation *Coloradoan* in Fort Collins, Colorado. Larsen said he expects the recent graduate new-hires to help him diversify his newsroom. Larsen said he has long tried to attract reporters and editors from different racial and cultural backgrounds to this newsroom, which is about 60 miles from Denver. Despite his best efforts, and

irrespective of the fact that the *Coloradoan* is a very solid local paper that has won its fair share of journalism awards, Larsen said that because Fort Collins is predominantly white, he has a hard time enticing minority candidates. He believes that recent graduates looking to work for a reputable paper right out of college could cut their teeth at the *Coloradoan* while bringing some desired diversity to bear.

> It is hard to recruit minority candidates. The challenge is finding people to go outside of their own life experiences. As news people, we are catering to a diverse population whose life experiences are different than ours. But the newsroom does not reflect that. And that's something that keeps me up at night. We actively recruit diverse candidates from journalism school. We don't have too many openings come up, but the last five positions I've had open, I've actively pursued diverse candidates. –Eric Larsen, *Coloradoan*

Larsen's position is that is the recruitment and retention of minority candidates is not occurring with enough frequency in journalism schools to keep up with his growing community demographics. An important finding concerned Larsen's answer of "diversity" to the question of "what do you anticipate the industry needing from recent graduates at the very moment?" indicates, in his mind, an institutional shortcoming on the part of journalism programs to recruit and train enough minority students. An argument can be made that Fort Collins, Colorado, might not be a desirable location to live, which is why Larsen is having difficulty recruiting minority reporters out of

journalism school. However, according to World Population Review (2019), the population of Fort Collins, Colorado, has steadily grown by an average of 2 percent since 2012. Included in that growth was a larger number of black and Hispanic residents, who now make up more than 13 percent of the city (World Population Review, 2019). As such, the need for a diverse newsroom to aptly reflect the changing demographics of the community is necessary, and Larsen is feeling the pressure to adapt and reflect the change.

Another thought-provoking perspective was offered by Cliff Schechtman, executive editor of the *Portland* (Maine) *Press Herald* and *Maine Sunday Telegram*, 32,300 daily circulation and 46,600 Sunday circulation, respectively. Schechtman said there is a presumption in newspaper editing circles and in the academy that when newspapers are on hard times and are forced to do a reduction in force, the vacated positions are replaced with a cheaper workforce, which is appositely represented by recent journalism school graduates. (Cliff Schechtman did not cite any particular study but said that it was his understanding that the popular assumption was that when someone was laid off from a newspaper job, they were replaced with a recent journalism school graduate who would do the job for less money. I provided research in Appendix 4 to illustrate that Schechtman was correct and that recent journalism school graduates with a bachelor's degree do indeed make less money than other professionals in other professions with a bachelor's degree. No data exists to specifically indicate whether the experienced and more expensive reporters get replaced by the cheaper journalism school graduates who have less experience.)

Schechtman recognized that while the practice of hiring recent journalism school graduates because they are cheaper than experienced newspaper people occurs, he does not participate in that practice. He also expanded upon the popular skills question and said recent graduates need to be curious and they should be voracious readers.

> I don't subscribe to the school that some of my peers do that we should hire cheaper labor, or that we should hire recent journalism school grads just because they have digital skills and that makes them a better journalist. I care more that they demonstrate that they read a lot. I can't underscore the importance of would-be journalists reading everything they can get their hands on. That helps broaden them. Cheaper isn't always better. - Cliff Schechtman, *Portland* (Maine) *Press Herald* and *Maine Sunday Telegram*

Schechtman's quote describes a need on the part of hiring editors for recent graduates who are well-versed in current events and popular culture. He, too, downplays the need for digital skills, which he believes were the drivers of curriculum overhauls. Rather, he points to a need on the part of the industry to have well-read newcomers who can then apply their limited though still valuable understanding of news and events to the newspaper's readership. Implicit in Schechtman's quote is that while he expects recent journalism school graduate new hires to write and report eloquently and clearly enough so as not to alienate the longtime readers, he also expects that new hires must be

sufficiently well read so as to synthesize their analysis of what they read and make it palatable to an audience of similarly aged readers.

Importance for a student to have a lot of depth in research and reporting versus production skills upon graduation

Based on the first two answers provided by a majority of hiring editors, this third question was intended to see whether research and reporting skills, which legacy newspaper hiring editors unanimously indicated were among the top three skills they seek to retain from recent journalism school new hires, did indeed trump production skills. Production skills are competencies that enhance a story and that produce a well-rounded, packaged story. For instance, photography, audio/video skills, digital platforms, and coding are considered production skills.

The research question, on its face, drew a mixture of "no" answers (n=8) and of questions to my question seeking clarity regarding what I meant by production skills (n=6). It should be noted that when the conversation progressed about this question, I explained that by production skills, I meant any skill other than writing or reporting that contributed to the finished product of a story, for print and/or online. This meant photography, audio or video skills, familiarity with digital platforms so that their stories could be posted in real time, or any other skill that took the story from beginning to consumer consumption. Analytic skills and Search Engine Optimization skills to make a story marketable also fell into this category.

After that explanation, the "no's" affirmed their answers, though they did agree that having one or more of these skills was important for a new hire in a 2019 newsroom. I gave the same explanation to the six editors who asked for clarification of the question, and five out of the six editors said writing and reporting still trumped production skills, bringing the total number of editors who believed writing and reporting skills were more important for new hires to 93 percent (n=13).

One editor, on the other hand, corrected my question and said this should not be an "either/or" scenario. Dan Sweeney from the *South Florida Sun Sentinel* (164,000 daily, 229,000 Sunday) said that an understanding of writing and reporting skills is an automatic supposition of any recent journalism school graduate job candidate. "Isn't that what draws a high school kid to this profession in the first place, the desire to learn writing and reporting?" he asked. "So for them to graduate from any journalism school worth its salt, I already assume they have a baseline skill set of writing and reporting by which they will inevitably improve on over the course of their career." I then rephrased my question and asked if a student therefore needed production skills in order to even be considered for a job at the *Sun Sentinel*, to which Sweeney answered in the affirmative.

> Minimum qualifications for both new hires and current employees have shifted over the last few years, with current employees receiving on-the-job training where skill sets have been updated. Newspaper journalists are now expected and required to not only be writers and reporters, but be at least competent on

> several video-production apps, have a social media presence and be able to work with large databases. They also need to be aware of online metrics and track which of their stories perform well and which do not. – Dan Sweeney, *South Florida Sun Sentinel*.

Sweeney highlighted an important component of daily newspaper journalism that was not always a consideration of new hires on their first job: Readership or click escalation. Sweeney said that a recent journalism school graduate new hire is expected to bring something other than writing and reporting to the table. That "something" depends on the student's education and aptitude. That "something" also depends on the open position, and whether the student and the job are a fit. Sweeney said the recent graduates need a production skill, one that enhances the story. That enhancement, he said, is what distinguishes that reporter's story from other stories. Editors track the various elements of a story at the *Sun Sentinel*, and Sweeney said that a recent graduate who has an additional skill set and can add it to a story that causes it to track well brings a much-needed aptitude infusion to the newsroom.

Andi Petrini from the *Daily Press* in Newport News, Virginia (55,000 daily, 85,000 Sunday) offered her own observation regarding the production skills of recent journalism school new hires over the years. She pointed to her 14-plus years of experience with the *Daily Press* as a barometer of various skill sets of recent journalism school graduates vis-à-vis production skills and said that students' familiarity with multiple skills is on the upswing.

> Students have been stronger in terms of digital proficiencies and storytelling in the last five or six years. It's important to know where you've been and where you're going. For me, it's not a deal breaker for a recent graduate to not have production skills. Communication is a big one, and I consider that a production skill because they need to be able to communicate the topic regardless of the platform. If they can't communicate effectively, it's hard to learn and teach. So the student needs a mixture of journalism education and interdisciplinary education. I like recent graduates who have a background in something other than just journalism, like poly sci, math or history. – Andi Petrini, *Daily Press*

Petrini noted that another label newspaper hiring editors use interchangeably with "production skills" is "interdisciplinary skills." She said these additional skills that are not the standard skills taught in journalism school are desired skill sets in the 21st century newsroom. Moreover, she alluded to a topic of whether journalism schools are necessary and whether a formal journalism education is necessary when students with an education in another field could apply their knowledge to their reporting and then learn to write on the side. The question about the necessity of a journalist having a classical journalism education is not new, but to hear Petrini describe it, the *Daily Press* certainly places a premium on students who have a skill "other than just journalism," meaning a skill that a student cannot learn in a journalism program per se.

One editor raised the issue of students needing layout and design experience as a key production need at a legacy daily newspaper. Rex Smith from the *Albany Times Union* (86,000 daily, 95,000 Sunday), who has been the editor and vice president for 17 years (and who was the managing editor for seven years before that) said that as he starts to consider his newsroom successor, he considers new hires with a range of production skills. This includes not only print design skills, but also sound, video, and digital production skills for the web, which is important as newspapers continue to add more tools to their arsenal other than only the written word. Newspapers, he said, are now producing podcasts and numerous web presentations. Public radio stations are now producing newsletters, and all media are creating web content.

> Some folks that I've identified as coming along as my successors, they don't have design experience. If you're really thinking long range, it's not a bad idea to have someone with a range of skills, including design skills. … Design skills meaning InDesign skills. Software for page design is adaptable enough, mostly done off of InDesign. Having newspaper design skills marries a design understanding with journalistic judgment. – Rex Smith, *Albany Times Union*

Smith's point of having multiple skills is echoed throughout the industry by the other people in charge of hiring at legacy newspapers. Since newsrooms are running leaner in contemporary times than in the past, the people that do the hiring are interested in having personnel with multiple skill sets and talents.

The lone representative from the weekly newspapers who was interviewed made a point that was not made by other hiring editors. For a recent journalism school graduate to hone his or her production skills, as well as writing and reporting skills, the country's newsweeklies would give that person an opportunity to learn by doing. Essentially, the country's news weeklies are like a post-graduate fellowship. Joe Pappalardo from the *Dallas Observer* (44,000 weekly) said that his newsweekly's roots are in experimental journalism and it fosters a culture of lifelong learning. He said that very few staff writers will call a weekly paper their home for the entirety of their career, but rather, newsweeklies are known for running lean operations and for their commitment to lengthy, in-depth journalism. Many young reporters win awards for their in-depth coverage.

The lean operation, Pappalardo said, therefore makes it essential for new hires to be nimble and willing to learn other production skills in order to consistently and constantly refresh online content in the interim between when the print product comes out on Thursdays.

> The need for utility players coming right out of college has evolved over the years, especially since the emphasis has shifted away from the print product being the focus to all the local content happening between the issues becoming the focus. The new staff writers were hired in part because they could operate on multiple platforms. For us, their writing skills are what distinguished them, but the expectation once hired was that they would become city experts, go-to sources for local news and events, and that they could communicate those news

> and events in print, online, through podcasts and social media. They had to become their own producers because we did not have enough editors to do the production and post production. And that's not going to change any time soon. – Joe Pappalardo, *Dallas Observer*

This section illustrated that hiring editors believe it is important for recent journalism school graduates to have one or more production skills in a 2019 newsroom. Production skills are also considered interdisciplinary skills, or skills that are not the historic tenets of a journalism school education. These skills include photography, audio/video skills, digital production skills, and coding. While some of these skills are part of a traditional journalism education, the idea that a student can be versed across multiple platforms while in journalism school is nuanced, as journalism schools have historically functioned in silos. This question highlighted the fact that regardless of the past learning or silos associated with a journalism school education, newspaper hiring editors in contemporary times want their new hires to have proficiency in an area or discipline that is not the traditional hallmark of a news/editorial journalism education.

The weight hiring editors place on extracurricular activities, grades, and internships

Hiring editors unanimously stated that a student's grades are not the primary concern. When considering a candidate for his or her first journalism job out of college, the people that do the hiring at legacy newspapers put more weight and emphasis on

clips written by journalism school students and on internships performed by recent journalism school graduates either while enrolled or immediately upon graduation than they do on grades (n=14). When asked to rank the importance of a recent journalism school graduate having good grades, good clips, one or more internships/externships/experiential learning, or extracurricular activities before that student was hired, the results were as follows:

Hiring Editors' Ranked Criteria For Recent Journalism School Graduate New Hires

1) Clips: 50 percent (n=7)
1) Internship/Externship/Experiential Learning 50 percent (n=7)
2) Good grades: 0 percent (n=0)
3) Extracurricular activities: 0 percent (n=0).

As all 14 hiring managers said that internships and clips were most important, 86 percent (n=12) said that they would consider clips from a student newspaper. Additionally, 71 percent (n=10) said that working for a student newspaper would suffice as internship/externship/experiential learning experience. When asked to rank the remaining two categories (good grades and extracurricular activities), the hiring editors split the vote at seven per category, or 50/50.

Rounding out the rankings of the importance (from most important to least important) of various types of knowledge for beginning journalists were: knowledge of statistics; understanding ethics of journalism; knowledge of economics; understanding responsibility to the public; knowledge of history; knowledge of geography; knowledge

of business; knowledge of government; knowledge of math; knowledge of current events (Dickson & Brandon, 2000).

Audrey Cooper, editor-in-chief of the *San Francisco Chronicle* (202,000 daily, 327,000 Sunday) said that to get a job right out of college at the *Chronicle* is extraordinarily hard. However, journalism school graduates who complete the two-year post-graduate Hearst fellowship do have a better chance of being hired. Regardless, when she is hiring a new reporter, she looks at whether the student had an internship, and where. She also stressed the necessity to be involved with student media in college, even if it is not part of the curriculum or associated/affiliated with the journalism program.

> Internships are number one and everything else is a distant second. One thing I tell students a lot is to get involved in their college papers, but don't feel like you should stay there all four years. If they're involved in their college papers – even as editor or managing editor – but never had an internship anywhere else, I get really nervous about hiring them. It literally fills me with dread. I find that the ones who were managers at their student papers handle the tough questions better, but the ones who have the real world experience do the best. – Audrey Cooper, *San Francisco Chronicle*

One answer that was a departure from other answers to this question came from John McKeon, president and group publisher of the *Houston Chronicle* (186,500 daily,

293,000 Sunday). McKeon came up through the editorial ranks, and he monitors all the activity in his newsroom. As such, he is involved in the hiring process to the extent that he vets the final candidates – once they have his editors' approvals – and meets with them. He also monitors the work coming out of the internship program. While he said that internships are the most important criteria for a recent journalism school graduate to have in order to be hired by the *Chronicle,* he thinks journalism school administrators should implement curricula that would encourage the student to become a specialist while in college rather than a utility player. That way, the student can have an internship in their area of interest and will make for a better team member for McKeon and the rest of the *Chronicle* staff. He also said that an understanding of audience needs to be taught to journalism school students so they know whom they are writing for and how it can vary from city to city.

> My advice to deans, this is where the old newspaper guy has to change: It's one thing to develop the story and the facts and to have the storytelling capabilities in terms of words, which is critically important, but how big is our audience? One of the things that troubles me is the industry cannot appear to be writing to an increasingly elite audience. To be affective, we need to reach out more to different people. A new hire's ability to do that effects how we put together our teams. I do think that means to a certain degree we need more specialists coming out of journalism schools. –John McKeon, *Houston Chronicle*

McKeon's comment about not all journalism students are going to be Five-Star players (a phrased used to the best high school and college athletes) is a key concept. Rather than training all journalism school students with the same curriculum and holding them up to the same standard, if deans and their deputies encouraged students to become well-versed in a particular subject, McKeon said they would have a better shot of being hired by his paper. The *Houston Chronicle* is the major metropolitan daily for the fourth largest city in the country (US City Populations, 2019). If this idea of specializing while in journalism school makes a candidate hirable to the *Houston Chronicle*, it stands to reason that other newspapers follow a similar standard.

Although the interviewees were split as to whether they felt internships or clips were more important for a recent journalism school graduate to have, and because all the interviewees (n=14) felt that internship experience and clips were collectively the most important experiences to have upon graduation, the approach that *Record Searchlight* Editor-in-Chief Silas Lyons employs accounts for both.

As the editor of the 17,000-circulation newspaper in Redding, California (19,000 Sunday circulation), Lyons said that in addition to wanting the best of the best coming out of journalism school, he, too, places a higher premium on students who have management experience within their student publication.

> Like any hiring manager, I'm trying to hire the people who are the most qualified that I can afford. That said, internships and clips would be by far the top reason I hire someone. If someone has had internships I'm more likely to

> evaluate him or her. I'll take clips from the student newspaper. Also, student press leadership – being the editor or senior editor makes them stand out more. – Silas Lyons, *Record Searchlight*

Lyons' position as the general manager of multiple newsrooms is common among local and regional newspaper groups. When there are not enough resources to have on-site managers or editors-in-chief at multiple titles, one person will be tapped to be the general manager/editorial director, and his or her job is to ensure the overall editorial vision and integrity of each individual paper as well as the collective. Since Lyons' position is common in communities across the country, his need for new hires who can produce consequential copy with little hand-holding out of the gates is necessary, as is a self-starter who can self-manage or, better yet, manage others. That sort of experience may be learned in a classroom, but the theory becomes practice only after the student completes an internship/externship, or some other form of experiential learning.

All of the interviewed hiring editors (n=14) said that gaining experience while enrolled as a student is a key component of attracting a hiring editor's eye. As all 14 hiring managers said that internships and clips were the most important part of a journalism school education when compared to grade point average and extracurricular activities, 86 percent (n=12) said that they would consider clips from a student newspaper. Additionally, 71 percent (n=10) said that working for a student newspaper would suffice as internship/externship/experiential learning experience. Although the idea of an internship making a student more attractive as a new hire is not altogether

new, its higher importance among hiring editors when juxtaposed with grades and campus involvement/extracurricular activities may surprise some readers. That is because past quantitative research found that longer the editor had worked in the news media, the more important he or she thought the student's grade point average was (Dickson & Brandon, 2000).

Essentially, my research findings say that a student can make mediocre grades but as long as he/she has clips or experience, he/she is more attractive to employers. Moreover, given the premium that hiring editors place on experiential learning and clips, and considering that this is not a new ask for hiring editors, it is surprising for researchers who cite the 2000 study from Dickson and Brandon that of the neither internships nor school media participation are requirements of a journalism school curriculum, one that could be monitored, standardized, and quantified by the ACEJMC. Rather, section "e" of the ACEJMC Curriculum and Instruction Standards (*Appendix 3)* specifically calls out programs as needing to have internship/externship capabilities, but it stops short of requiring them. "The unit advocates and encourages opportunities for internship and other professional experiences outside the classroom and supervises and evaluates them when it awards academic credit. Schools may award academic credit for internships in fields related to journalism and mass communications, but credit should not exceed six semester credits (or nine quarter credit hours)" (ACEJMC Curriculum and Instruction Standards, 2017, section e). The ACEJMC allows accredited journalism programs to regulate themselves. Given the aforementioned feedback from hiring editors, it is surprising for academic journalism scholars that journalism programs

would not take the guidelines of the ACEJMC and expand on them to make internships mandatory. That, however, may be a part of the disconnect between hiring editors and academic administrators researched and reported in the following section.

Other interview findings: lack of industry/academy communication

There was not a scripted research question that directly asked hiring editors whether they felt there was a disconnect between those legacy newspaper industry practitioners and the academic administrators shaping journalism school curriculum. However, throughout the course of the interviews, starting after my third interview when a hiring editor started to disparage academic curriculum planning and claimed it was detached from the industry, I began asking hiring editors about industry/academy communication (n=11).

Of those 11 legacy newspaper hiring editors who were asked specifically about what sort of communication exists between them and journalism school administrators, 36 percent said they have called specific professors as reference checks on a student (n=4), 27 percent said they have been contacted by a dean to enquire whether there were any job openings at the paper (n=3). One editor said she was in contact with select schools of whose students are usually tapped for post-graduate internships, which sufficed her need for regular communication with the academy.

None of them said they have been contacted by a journalism academic administrator to inquire about any specific class requests or offerings from any journalism schools. Similarly, none of them said that any journalism academic

administrators from local colleges and universities have contacted them to take the temperature of the newspaper and see if there was anything they could do to help, especially at times of layoffs. (In the "results" section of journalism academic administrators, it will be disclosed that the opposite is also true: Administrators say that they are not receiving calls from hiring editors either.) The apparent need for communication between stakeholders is an important finding.

Rex Smith from the *Albany Times Union* said that because of the length of time he has been running the newsroom in Albany, he has built personal and professional relationships with academic administrators. However, he does not have regular phone calls or meetings with any of them to discuss the wants and needs of the industry in general, or of the *Albany Times Union* specifically.

> I have not been solicited by a university for advice, even though I've had friends who become deans and I've been on campuses giving lectures. I'm a little surprised they haven't called. Maybe they asked my colleagues at more prestigious newspapers [laughs]. –Rex Smith, *Albany Times Union*

Smith offered a scenario to buttress his assertion that there needs to be more communication between the industry and the academy.

At one point, the University of Albany added a journalism major to their curriculum. The dean of arts and sciences at the time created an advisory board to help form the curriculum. Smith was invited to be a member. The newly-formed advisory board convened for roughly a half-dozen meetings over a two-year period. Significant effort was put into this panel, with board members flying in from California and other

compass points around the country that were quite the haul to upstate New York. The other journalism practitioners on the advisory board offered advice regarding how to shape a curriculum, and their advice, according to Smith, was ignored. When a new dean was appointed, she held an emergency meeting of the advisory board, composed of legacy newspaper editors with large dailies across the country. By now, the editors expressed their frustration with the amount of time they put into the board and how they honored their commitment to the University of Albany to shape a sound, reliable journalism school.

After that, the panel was never convened again.

On the practitioner side of editors reaching out to the academy, Smith said that when he was chair of the Committee on News Literacy of the American Society of News Editors, he used to seek out university leaders. "I was advocating for inclusion in university curricula of news literacy training, and I did a panel at national conferences of the American Council on Education and AEJMC, and met individually with folks including NYU President John Sexton, Hunter College President Jennifer Raab, and others. All for naught," Smith said.

In late 2018, Smith was tapped to be the chair of the Alumni Board at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism (his alma matter). These days, he's interacting with some top journalism educators. "In that regard," he said, "I'm feeling a bit bad about my rather overboard statement that I'm ignored by academia." He plans to engage newspaper editors with regularity and start an ongoing dialogue between Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and legacy newspaper editors.

At the *Houston Chronicle,* president and group publisher John McKeon has been considering his relationship with academia recently, as well as the relationship his editors have with various journalism schools and programs. “I will say that I’ve not personally had the discussion [about *Chronicle* wants and needs as they pertain to recent journalism school graduates] with anyone running a journalism school, but we talk about it here with our editors and our senior reporters and more and more it is being discussed that we need to have these conversations with journalism schools,” McKeon said.

Silas Lyons at the *Record Searchlight* said that he is surprised that more journalism schools in the area, including his alma mater, have not reached out to him to query about the wants and needs of industry professionals as well as the expectations of recent journalism school graduates. But his response substantiates the presumption that a conversation takes two people, and the phone works both ways also.

> I can tell you that my phone isn’t ringing off the hook with academics asking how they can train students better. But to be honest, I’m not calling them either. People at journalism schools want to be able to say they’ve asked for advice, but in a lot of cases, I don’t think that they really want to hear it. It’s pretty easy to look at someone in the field and say he or she doesn’t understand how to run a newsroom. It’s a lot different when you’re actually running a newsroom. –Silas Lyons, *Record Searchlight*

Sean Scully, the director of news content and a hiring editor at the *Napa Valley Register* in California (12,000 daily), said the reason he does not think he has heard from any academic administrators about industry wants and needs is because academics do not believe in the longevity of legacy newspaper journalism. He added that it is ironic that the very people whose job it is to collect data and research the industry are not reaching out to him or his colleagues for their research.

> Never heard from anybody. Now that you mention it, I would think they [academic administrators] were interested in what the ground-level people are saying about what students need to know for their first job. I've never talked to the deans, and they've never called me. … I'd tell them that the legacy media still exists. We're still here. Academics are looking at the legacy media and thinking print is dead, but that's 70 percent of our revenue. I wish they'd [academic administrators] have students looking at life more entrepreneurially. That way, they could contribute to the solution. – Sean Scully, *Napa Valley* (California) *Register*

The hiring editors highlighted in this section, who represent newspapers that span from coast to coast and also represent the states in the middle, and whose circulations range from 12,000/day on the lower end to 300,000/day on the higher end, all had a similar comment: They feel like journalism academic administrators are making no efforts to speak to them. Whether they harbor these feelings because they

think the academy is myopic or whether they harbor these feelings because they think the academy does not believe in the longevity of newspaper journalism, the key takeaway is that editors of all sized papers and in all geographic regions harbor these feelings. Whether this is true, empirically, 100 percent of the 11 hiring editors who were asked this question spoke of a perceived disconnect between the industry and the academy, and perception is reality (Betancourt, 2018). Just as in healthcare, as Bentancourt (2018) writes, "Patients' perception of us, and of our health care system and the team around us, informs, and is, their reality" (p. 241), the same principle holds true in journalism: The academy's perception of newsroom editors, and of their reporters and new hires around them, informs, and is, their reality.

Journalism schools that hiring editors recruit from

Another question posited to hiring editors as part of the qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviewing process was: Which journalism schools do you believe are doing the best job educating students? All the editors were asked the same open-ended question and no limit was placed on the number of schools they could name (Appendix 7, Table 3*)*. Additionally, in a follow-up question of whether the schools they mentioned were ones that they either actively recruited from or kept an eye on, 93 percent of respondents said yes (n=13). One hiring editor said that there are no schools that he actively monitors or recruits from, and that applicants are screened based on their internships and clips, and then called for interviews accordingly. The hiring editors

were given no other parameters, like undergraduate, graduate school, or department specifications.

Three schools received five mentions: Northwestern University, University of Missouri, and the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. Four hiring editors said Ohio University, and the University of Texas at Austin received three votes. Receiving two votes were the University of Wisconsin at Madison, University of Michigan, Oregon State University, University of California at Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism, Arizona State University, Elon University, and the University of Southern California. The remaining schools mentioned were one-offs, receiving one vote each (see Appendix 7, Table 3).

Summary: Hiring editors' results from research questions

The semi-structured in-depth interviews of this qualitative research yielded several patterns. All 14 hiring editors interviewed used similar terms to describe their ideal candidate for open entry-level positions. On its face, the most important qualities of recent journalism school graduates are an ability to write and report. Those skills were mentioned unanimously across the board, despite the size, frequency, or geographic location of the publication. More interview questions yielded other non-negotiable qualities, such as an unwavering, innate curiosity of local, national, and international issues that affect the local readership and by proxy, an empathetic view of how those issues reflect humanity. All hiring editors used words like "curiosity," "questioning," and "inquisitiveness" to describe the innate qualities that future reporters

need to have in order to make themselves attractive to hiring editors. In terms of production skills, new hires need to possess a separate set of production skills that were not traditionally required of journalism school new hires, including business acumen, photography skills, investigative reporting skills, multi-media skills, and team reporting appreciation (see Appendix 8, Table 4).

In order to demonstrate writing and reporting skills and production skills to hiring editors upon graduation, the recent journalism school graduates' aptitudes should be expressed through internships/externships/experiential learning and by proxy, through those clips. A majority of papers will consider significant student newspaper experience acceptable, however in order to distinguish one's self on a student newspaper, the recent journalism school graduate should have some management/editor experience, as that sort of experience in a non-departmental environment shows motivation and dedication. A high grade point average and extracurricular campus or community involvement factor in very little – if at all – to the hiring process. In contemporary times, recent journalism school graduates are gauged much like professional reporters when applying for jobs: They are only as good as their experience and clips indicate (see Appendix 11, Table 5).

Although four journalism programs seem to carry the most clout among hiring editors (Northwestern University, University of Missouri, Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, and Ohio University), a wide-enough variety of programs exists to indicate that there is not a sole concentration of go-to programs for this spread-out collection of legacy newspapers.

Chapter 7: Results, academic administrator interviews

The scripted research questions posed to the academic administrators were couched in a similar fashion as the ones to the legacy newspaper hiring editors, meaning they were semi-structured and purposefully broad. The reason they were purposefully broad is because I intended to ask follow-up questions based on the initial answers to the broad questions. The answers then wove a tapestry that helped explain in more detail the various aspects of journalism education that the administrators of the various programs felt were most important for students to learn before accepting their first jobs at a legacy newspaper. (A summary table of the findings from these interviews can be seen below and found in Appendix 12, Table 6.)

Major Theme	**Minor Theme**	**Applicable Quote**
100% of journalism academic administrators interviewed said that writing & reporting skills are most important quality of journalism school education, and 100% said ethics were tied for most important	No legacy newspaper hiring editors mentioned ethics as a topo priority, most likely because that's a baked-in expectation of journalism school graduates	"Starting on the first day of their first year of college, we are teaching them blue-collar journalism skills. That means we're teaching them how to listen well, write well, and tell a good story." – Dean Scott Titsworth, Ohio University
94% of journalism academic administrators interviewed said that internships/externships and clips were most important quality of a journalism student	A decade earlier in a quantitative study, journalism academic administrators said that GPA was the most important quality of a journalism student	"Newspaper hiring editors are coming here looking for students with as much experience as possible. Most of our students have two internships by the time they graduate." Dean

		Ann Brill, University of Kansas
More than 50% of academic administrators pointed to a teaching hospital model of journalism education, although only one administrator called the teaching hospital model out by name	Three journalism academic administrators said they have knocked down the silos of their journalism programs so that students can become well-versed in multiple journalism and communication disciplines	"The most important skill a student can learn in journalism school is the ability to adapt well enough to be able to say "yes" to whatever they are asked to do. That means print, broadcast, and digital." Dean Charles N. Davis, University of Georgia
Other majority terms academic administrators used to describe the value of what is taught in journalism school are opportunity, experience, learning laboratory, empowering – journalism students need to be able to adapt because they won't know what the industry is like when they graduate	Only two journalism administrators pointed to data journalism and coding as important qualities learned in J-school. However, all journalism school academic administrators said that students need to have a better, more well-rounded education that the education of journalism school students pre-Internet	"Here's my little elevator pitch for students interested in journalism: The job that they will get when they graduate probably doesn't exist now. Parents want my reassurance that I'm giving their child the skills necessary to be successful in life and in journalism." – Dean Kathleen Richardson, Drake University
94% of journalism academic administrators said there is a disconnect between them and the legacy newspaper hiring editors. 100% of them said they believe the newspaper industry is in trouble or "dying"	50% of journalism academic administrators said the only conversations they have with the academy are with various professors as reference checks. No communication occurs regarding curricula or direction	"If there's a disconnect between the industry and the academy, it's been around forever. Look at a typical job posting for a journalism student: I'm not sure Jesus could meet all those requirements." Dr. Debora Wenger, University of Mississippi

I originally intended to interview journalism school administrators until the interview answers reached saturation. Most scholars maintain that a range of interviews

is necessary to reach saturation (Dworkin, 2012). Morse (1995) said that saturation occurs when researchers cease data collection because they have enough data to build a comprehensive and convincing theory. As far as the number of sources is concerned, Yin recommends at least six sources of evidence (Marshall, 2013).

I reached saturation for the four overriding research questions early on in the interviewing process. After the sixth interview, I could make a case for saturation regarding most journalism school administrators' views on important skills, how they [administrators] define a successful academic career, why a journalism major is important, and the importance of experiential learning in a journalism education. However, I continued to interview journalism academic administrators after reaching saturation for two reasons:

1) The follow-up questions continued to take the research down different paths that were apropos for this study and that will be the necessary basis for future studies, and;

2) As with the hiring editors, because not every academic administrator replied to my interview requests, I wanted to interview all the academic administrators who agreed to take time to answer questions. Journalism academic administrators from the top 70 journalism programs, based on the 2018/2019 collegefactual.com list, were contacted. The final number of academic administrators interviewed was 16 (n=16), and the interviews occurred between Dec. 4, 2018, and January 14, 2019.

All journalism school academic administrators were chosen from the collegefactual.com list of the 2018/2019 Best Journalism Colleges in the U.S. (2018).

The rankings of the journalism schools whose administrators replied to my request for an interview were as follows: 4, 7, 8, 14, 17, 19, 27, 30, 32, 36, 52, 57, 60, 62, 63, and 65.

Additionally, 69 percent of the schools are currently accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) (n=11); one school administrator said the faculty is currently putting an application packet together for the next accreditation review in 2020, and one school said it was going to let its accreditation lapse because the administrators no longer believed accreditation was necessary.

The most important skills a journalism school administrator believe students need to learn by the time they graduate

The various journalism school administrators listed a range of different skills as most important in the pursuit of a journalism degree. Those skills that tracked at the top were ones that used the following terms: ethics/values/communications law 100 percent (n=16); news skills/writing/reporting 100 percent (n=16); curiosity/analysis/synthesis/critical thinking 81 percent (n=13); technology/social media/coding/multimedia 75 percent (n=12).

Former Dean of the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, Dr. Bradley Hamm, said he received multiple requests for Northwestern students from newspapers all over the world during his tenure as dean. He said between 2004 and 2010, hiring editors who contacted him were very specific about the skills they wanted

a student to have before an offer of employment was extended. At that time, Northwestern adapted and taught students very specific software skills, many of which have been phased out of newsrooms across the country, which is why he said that Medill currently focuses on timeless skills like general media knowledge and ethics, news analysis, and writing and reporting.

> Usually we look at the balance among what you would see as core values – law, ethics, fairness, those kinds of things, and then the kind of skills you would need which would traditionally be on the writing side. Then we look at news skills and news attitudes. In this part, the attitude that people would need to succeed in journalism is openness, and they need to be interested in the world around them. – Former Dean Bradley Hamm, Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism

However, while former Dean Hamm and the Medill curriculum have a track record that indicates a preparedness on the part of the students who graduate and pursue a career as a newspaper journalist, Hamm said that legacy newspapers needs to adjust their business practices if they want to not only recruit, but retain the best and brightest students from Northwestern and other top journalism programs.

> The biggest problem newspapers are facing these days is getting people into the traditional newsroom. Newsrooms are moving in the other direction. The

> constant layoffs will lead to a short-term career. The problem, frankly, is pay. Once you get past pay, I think that people still are willing to do [newspaper jobs]. Pay has to get better and it's a shame that the current corporate model is low pay and no raises, which is no way to attract the brightest people. … The profession can find as much talent as it wants. But they need to have the places for them, and they need to have the pay for them. That's why so many students are going into PR. – Dr. Bradley Hamm, Northwestern University

Dr. Hamm is referencing the well-known and well-documented contentious relationship between journalists and public relations practitioners. According to DeLorme & Fedler (2003), journalists historically look down their noses at public relations practitioners, and have done so for more than 100 years. Part of the reason for the century-long hostile relationship, according to DeLorme & Fedler (2003), is because there are more jobs in PR than in newspaper journalism, and on average, they pay better. "Journalists seem to treat public relations and its practitioners with contempt. The negativity currently permeates journalism and is frequently reflected in verbal comments and in printed articles throughout the profession and in academia. … For years, journalists have charged that PR practitioners are unethical, manipulative, one-sided, and deceptive" (DeLorme & Fedler, 2003, p. 99). Dr. Hamm in no way espoused this view in our interview. Given that there is a belief among journalists that PR practitioners serve special interests and not the public, the idea that a classically trained journalist would leave a newspaper's newsroom for a public relations outfit for any reason other than money is unthinkable (DeLorme & Fedler, 2003). That is because broadly

speaking, journalists view the PR profession as being more akin to advertising and marketing than to reporting and writing, and because journalists have harbored these thoughts for more than 100 years (DeLorme & Fedler, 2003). Leaving newspaper journalism, if newspaper journalism is what a reporter was trained in college to do, in order to go into PR is a money-grab (DeLorme & Fedler, 2003. Therefore, if pay does not increase in newspaper journalism, Dr. Hamm predicts that more talented journalism students will go into fields like public relations, where there is increased job security and a higher salary.

One of the top-ranked journalism programs, according to collegefactual.com (2018), was the School of Media and Public Affairs at George Washington University (ranked #8). At George Washington University, journalism is a major within a department, but it is not a school unto itself. As such, journalism is folded into the liberal arts sequence. Frank Sesno, Director of the School of Media and Public Affairs, approached the question of needed skills for a journalism student from this perspective.

> Students should have the skills that a liberal arts education teaches: Analysis, synthesis, critical thinking. They should be able to navigate their way through a changing media marketplace. Clearly, there are other skills that are easily definable. They need to be great communicators so they can connect with sources and they need to be good information gatherers. And good writers, that should be first and foremost. I don't care what medium you're in, you have to be

> able to write. –Frank Sesno, Director of the School of Media and Public Affairs, George Washington University

Sesno said that critical skills like ethics should be ingrained from the start and part of the DNA of every professional, responsible journalist. Furthermore, journalism entrepreneurship is also an important intangible skill, and learning the business side of journalism in particular is part of a well-rounded liberal arts education. Additionally, Sesno stressed the twin skills of interviewing and listening as canons of a George Washington University journalism education. Listening and communicating what one hears is a fundamental part of being in media and public affairs, he said, yet it has become something of a lost art that must be revived. "At a time of such polarization in our country, journalism is under attack and we're being defined by identity politics. Listening becomes something that reporters should be very thoughtful about." Sesno said that the research skills that are imparted to journalism students – and by association, the research skills that are held by the faculty of those journalism schools – can not only help professionals in the newspaper industry, but in the entire media industry. However, those skills are brought to bear in journalism school, and then honed over time.

At the University of Colorado, Boulder, the School of Journalism and Mass Communication was shuttered in 2015 in order to pave the way for the College of Media, Communication and Information. The University of Colorado, Boulder, maintains its ACEJMC accreditation status and its department, according to Chair Dr.

Elizabeth Skewes, allows for journalism students to be exposed to other media platforms before they graduate. However, at the core of a CICU education are basic journalism fundamentals.

Dr. Skewes acknowledged the trend among journalism schools to teach a more technology-based curriculum, and although she does believe that having a technology background as a journalism student is both important and beneficial from a pedagogical perspective, it is, in fact, secondary to writing fundamentals and curiosity.

> There's a lot of push in journalism schools now to make sure that upon graduation, the kids are walk-in-the-door ready with all kinds of technology skills. Those are important, but fundamental reporting skills and curiosity are still at the top of the list. Technology is secondary. Too many schools think that students need to learn everything about technology and I don't think so. Having multiple skills – just one of them – editing and something else so you can say: "I do that, too," that's enough. I don't think you need to know everything. – Dr. Elizabeth Skewes, Chair of the College of Media, Communication and Information, University of Colorado, Boulder

One of the higher-ranked journalism departments, California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly, #19), takes an opposing view as it pertains to technology as part of the curriculum. Professor Mary Glick is the chair of the journalism department in the College of Liberal Arts at Cal Poly. She agreed, along with the other 15 journalism

academic administrators, that basic writing and reporting skills are paramount in a journalism education. However, she said that in this day and age, technology skills are principal for a journalism student to have, both from a scholarly perspective, and from the perspective of attracting would-be employers. To that end, Glick said that it is not simply enough to know the theoretical concepts of technology and their applications, but journalism graduates in 2019 should know how to implement contemporary technological advancements into the craft of writing and reporting.

> As far as skills go, I think students need to be able to tell stories in whatever way audiences are prepared to receive them. Students need to be agile with changing technological skills. They need to learn video explainers, the kinds of things that digital native sites would employ. … Technologies and abilities within those technologies depend on what's coming down the pike. For instance, we are looking at drones for storytelling, we're experiment with 3-D or virtual reality storytelling; we're looking at what it being used in society now and how our students can move the industry forward. ... We're trying to incorporate technology into various classes we already teach in order to stay ahead of the curve. – Professor Mary Glick, Journalism Department Chair, California Polytechnic State University

Cal Poly was the only school that openly embraced technology as the key component – and as a necessity – among their current journalism students. Professor Glick views

storytelling and technology as fused together in 21st century journalism. Although Cal Poly was the only journalism school that requires students to take technologically explicit courses to graduate, the perception among newspaper hiring editors, based on my interviews as well as through literature review, is they believe that most journalism schools have shifted their curricula whereby technology supersedes traditional writing/reporting/editing skills (Dickson & Brandon, 2000; Russell, & Eccles, 2018).

The various journalism school administrators interviewed listed a range of different skills as "most important" that a student must grasp before graduating with a journalism degree. Skills that tracked at the top were ones that used the following terms: ethics/values/communications law 100 percent (n=16); news skills/writing/reporting 100 percent (n=16); curiosity/analysis/synthesis/critical thinking 81 percent (n=13); technology/social media/coding/multimedia 75 percent (n=12). One skill that was organically brought up by Cal Poly's Journalism Department Chair Professor Mary Glick was technological proficiency, including the use of drones and 3-D and virtual reality storytelling, as important as writing and reporting, and that the two live side-by-side. This concept may, in time, permeate the 75 percent of interviewees who believe that technology is homologous with social media or analytics/coding. Former Northwestern University Medill former Dean Dr. Bradley Hamm pointed to the ever-growing salary disparity between newspaper journalists and PR practitioners as a limitation of journalism schools retaining the best and brightest newspaper journalism students.

Academic administrators' definitions of a successful college career

When asked what skills define a successful academic career in the journalism, communications, or mass communications department, the first three administrators interviewed countered with a question of their own. They asked a question along the lines of, "what do you mean?"

I explained to them, and then adjusted the language for the remaining 13 interviews, that the general criteria for defining a successful academic career in a journalism school or department should be considered, or ranked, among these three criteria: grades, campus involvement/extracurricular activities, and internships/externships/experiential learning.

The majority of journalism academic administrators interviewed said internships/externships/experiential learning (n=15), or 94 percent were the most important. Moreover, 81 percent (n=13) added the term "clips" to the definition of a successful academic career in journalism, derived by the aforementioned experiential learning criteria. Only one academic administrator replied that a student's GPA was the most important element of his or her academic career, and none of the respondents said extracurricular activities/ campus involvement (explained to those who asked for a qualifier as student government, student clubs, fraternity/sorority life, athletics, or any additional outside interests that were not required for their degree). When asked to determine the second place finisher, GPA tracked slightly higher with eight respondents.

Of the 94 percent of journalism academic administrators who said that internships/externships/experiential learning was the defining element of a successful journalism career, 73 percent (n=11 out of 15 respondents[3]) said that they would consider involvement in the student newspaper to fulfill this criteria.

Another metric worth noting is that although 94 percent of academic administrators responding said that internships/externships/experiential learning is the most important condition of a successful journalism career, only three of the programs represented by interviewed academic administrators make an internship/externship/experiential learning course mandatory for graduation. The rest of the programs encourage students to have at least one internship by the time they graduate, but they can graduate without one.

Dean Ann Brill from the William Allen White School of Journalism & Mass Communication at the University of Kansas said that legacy newspaper hiring editors frequently inquire about KU students that have clips and experience. The University of Kansas William Allen White School of Journalism & Mass Communication is one of the few programs represented in the study that requires an internship to graduate, and they are similarly one of the few programs that offer a course for writing and editing for the student newspaper, *The University Daily Kansan*, for credit. Dean Brill said that experience and clips are necessary for students to not only operate effectively in their first newspaper job out of college, but the clips one generates while working a beat are

[3] N=15 because one of the 16 respondents said that grades was the most important characteristic to define a successful academic career.

invaluable, so much so that even though the student newspaper offers one such option to achieve academic credit, most KU journalism students voluntarily pursue at least one additional internship.

> Newspaper hiring editors are coming here looking for students with as much experience as possible. Most of our students have two internships by the time they graduate. Newspaper editors don't have a whole lot of time to gradually teach students how to do their job. Newsrooms aren't that big anymore. The main questions editors are asking of new hires are: Where have you worked, and what can you do? Can you cover a story? … It's not a requirement [at KU] to do two internships. We post 500 jobs and internships, and not just in news media. We also benefit from our proximity to major local papers in Topeka or Kansas City. – Dean Ann Brill, William Allen White School of Journalism & Mass Communication, University of Kansas

Professor Brian McDermott, Chair of the Journalism Department at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, is an administrator who agreed that internships/externships/experiential learning help make a student hirable. At the same time, though, he recognized that UMass' journalism department does not require an internship.

> We've hired three academic journalism studies professors in the last 10 years, and all of our faculty understand the importance of educating students on industry demands. Our faculty understands practice and students who want to practice. In that spirit, our journalism practice classes focus on journalistic storytelling and ethics. However, we're well aware that even the best professors can only teach so much in the classroom. Right now, we don't require internships, but we strongly encourage them. We're considering making internships a required part of the curriculum because of the demand in the industry for them. – Professor Brian McDermott, Chair of the Journalism Department at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst

In College Park, Maryland, the University of Maryland's Philip Merrill College of Journalism welcomed an estimated 130 freshmen for the 2018 fall semester, up 50 percent from the previous year (Anderson, 2018). A historically solid program (Merrill College of Journalism ranked #7 on collegefactual.com's list), Dean Lucy Dalglish acknowledged that the University of Maryland's Merrill College of Journalism is hyper-competitive, and not everyone who applies is accepted. As a result, she places a premium on GPA both to get in and to stay in the college. Because Merrill College of Journalism students are naturally competitive and high-achievers, Dalglish said that completing internships for those students looking to go into legacy newspaper journalism is a natural progression of the academic career. The capstone course requires a form of experiential learning. As a prerequisite to graduating from Merrill, students

must partake in either the full-time Capital News Service Bureau, part-time Capital News Service Bureau, urban affairs reporting in downtown Baltimore for story publication in the *Sun* or a similarly reputable periodical, national security reporting in Maryland and the surrounding states for story publication in the *Sun* or a similarly reputable periodical, broadcast news producing for the Capital New Service's "Maryland Newsline," or radio broadcasting for an local or national radio program. To that end, Merrill College of Journalism is associated with the teaching hospital model, as the capstone is a mandatory experiential learning component of the curriculum.

The teaching hospital model is a method of education practiced by medical school students, which is a model of learning by doing (Brauer & Ferguson, 2015).

Maryland's Merrill College of Journalism students have been employing this model for almost three decades, and Dean Dalglish said it is one of the hallmarks of a Maryland journalism education, and it is one of the hallmarks that hiring editors have come to expect.

> Certainly, academic performance is really important at Merrill. We also place a lot of emphasis on internships and our capstone experiences. We've been doing the medical school model of journalism for 29 years. … While you are here, you will not graduate without a heavy-duty experience in the field where you are doing real journalism. Whether it's investigative reporting picked up by the [Baltimore] *Sun* or broadcast picked up by [PBS] NewsHour, you will have experience by the time you graduate from here. And grades. … This is

> Maryland. It is not an easy school to get into or out of. For our students, that is a form of motivation. Our students are attracted to our program because we are hands-on and they receive real world experience in our [teaching hospital] model. I'm not saying it's the only way to run a journalism school, but we're on this campus and we have to fit in with the rest of university, which is highly competitive. – Dean Lucy Dalglish, Philip Merrill College of Journalism, University of Maryland.

In Athens, Georgia, Dean Charles N. Davis from the University of Georgia's Grady College of Journalism & Mass Communication addressed the question of prioritizing grades, internships/externships/experiential learning, and extracurricular activities by recognizing that a high GPA does not necessarily define a successful journalism education. He pointed to the fact that the Grady College of Journalism & Mass Communication has long had a reputation for producing students that are walk-in ready for their first newspaper and broadcast jobs out of college, though he said that it is only within the last five to seven years that Grady changed the curriculum so that graduates are walk-in ready for positions across a wide array of media disciplines. He attributed a change in curriculum and the knocking down of silos so that Grady graduates are comfortable working in "Journalism with a capital J," meaning any field of journalism and not a specialized track like news/editorial, broadcast, public relations, or advertising. It all starts with experiential learning, he said, and the intangible quality of adaptability that internships and externships foster. However, Dean Davis recognized

that internships and externships are but a component of a successful journalism education. He said Grady's curriculum harnesses the skills and competencies one gains from an internship/externship and incorporates them in the classroom.

> The most important skill a student can learn in journalism school is the ability to adapt well enough to be able to say "yes" to whatever they are asked to do. That means print, broadcast, and digital. We're trying to train digital athletes. Digital Swiss Army Knives. We're training students to have enough chops in enough areas to be comfortable saying "yes." In order for that to be the case, the curriculum has to be experiential at its heart. We worked really hard on all of our reporting, editing, and video production courses to make sure that everything is hands-on. … I'd put grades way down on the list [of a successful academic journalism experience]. It's the experiences and the hands-on experiential learning that is not just important, but critical in journalism education. That way, the academic enterprise begins to look a lot like the out-of-classroom enterprise. You can get a lot of hands-on experience in our classrooms. – Dean Charles N. Davis, Grady College of Journalism & Mass Communication, University of Georgia.

The University of Georgia's Grady College was one of the first mainstream journalism programs to openly shutter the silo approach to journalism education. The silo approach has been mentioned previously in this dissertation. The decades-old

journalism education model was that a student declared a concentration once admitted to the school: news/editorial, broadcast (radio or TV), and in schools that had them, advertising or strategic communications. According to Dean Davis, Georgia's response to the Internet-disrupted media landscape was to do away with concentrations, or "silos" and require that students take courses across multiple media platforms. Many other journalism programs at correspondingly large R1 universities followed Georgia's lead.

Distinguishing characteristics of administrators' journalism programs

The 16 academic administrators interviewed pointed to varying characteristics that distinguish their programs from other journalism schools and departments. There were few detectable patterns among the schools. Descriptors used to define a university's program or a department's distinguishing impact on a journalism student were "experience" (n=12), "opportunities" (n=10), "learning" or "learning laboratory" (n=7), "empowering" (n=4), "real" (n=3), and two administrators said their journalism programs are most well-known for "data journalism" and "coding" (n=2), and one administrator said "winning" (n=1). (Administrators were allowed to list as many descriptors as they wanted.)

Dr. Donica Mensing is the associate dean in the Reynolds School of Journalism at the University of Nevada, Reno. In addition to setting curriculum at UNR's Reynolds School, she is also a scholar whose research focuses on journalism education and the transformation of news (Green & Mensing, 2006; Mensing, 2010; Mensing, 2017).

Regarding the question of what distinguishes the journalism program at UNR's Reynolds School from other journalism programs, Dr. Mensing said the question is one that faculty and administrators have been wrestling with in recent years, especially given the uptick in journalism school enrollment. She also said that the open attacks on news practitioners by many in the media, including the President of the United States (Anderson, 2018), might be a contributing factor for increased journalism school enrollment, which is why UNR Reynolds wants to distinguish itself from other competitive programs. She pointed to the idea of making journalism be a double major along with another discipline as the future of UNR Reynolds journalism and a criteria not common in journalism educational circles.

> We want to develop a sense of who our students are but at the moment, it is hard to generalize our students. The top 10 percent have had a tremendous experience because we are small and they had internships at places like NPR, or they worked at the local newspaper. They published on different and interesting websites, and many are bilingual. We have a large Hispanic community.
>
> I'm always pushing students toward double majors. We just created a dual major with Spanish and I just started working on a dual major with geography to cover students who want to cover climate change. … I believe to be competitive in this age, students need to be diversified. I think geography is a perfect complement for journalism students. – Assistant Dean Donica Mensing, Reynolds School of Journalism, University of Nevada, Reno

In the Midwest, a program that boasts a 100 percent hiring rate of journalism students within six months of graduation since 2012 (with the lone exception being 2013, when there was a 99 percent hiring rate) is the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. That number bucks the national average of students who are hired directly out of college to do jobs that require a bachelor degree, which averages only 53 percent ("What can students do to improve their chances of finding employment after college?", 2017). Moreover, Dean Kathleen Richardson said she can sit in her office with a prospective student and his or her parents and guarantee that student an internship while enrolled at Drake. That, she said, is as much a trademark of the Drake University School of Journalism and Mass Communication degree as is Drake's commitment to social media and technology reporting classes.

> There are a lot of media in Des Moines so 100 percent of our students get internships, and in that way, we get feedback on how they're progressing with their education. Literally all of them get internships. We have more internships than we have students. We have a very close relationship with Meredith Corporation, the big magazine company here, and the students have an opportunity to be over there for 20 hours a week. I think that is the most extensive relationship where we have intense feedback. … I feel we're a couple of steps ahead of what the industry is doing. Five years ago, when we redid our

> curriculum, instead of having the students in their silos, we got them all together and they all now work on multimedia websites and work on stories around the Midwest so a story will have a videographer and a photographer and a writer. That's not unusual in the industry, but it is in academia. In some respect, we're doing things that the average community newspaper doesn't have the time or the resources to do. That, in turn, makes us unique. – Dean Kathleen Richardson, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Drake University

Another unique feature of Drake's program is that students are prepared to do any entry level job in journalism by the time they graduate, and they are taught to think critically about the jobs that do not exist yet.

> Here's my little elevator pitch for students interested in journalism: The job that they will get when they graduate probably doesn't exist now. I hear that the newspaper industry is kind of in survivalist mode. Parents want my reassurance that I'm giving their child the skills necessary to be successful in life and in journalism. As the dean, to be very honest, a student will say, "I've always wanted to be on TV," but the reality is that more students come in and my goal as dean is to make sure they graduate with a toolkit of skills so they take advantage of whatever is going on inside the industry. They should be able to write and speak and report and use multimedia and social media effectively and

> basically not be afraid and learn how to learn. - Kathleen Richardson, Drake University

Drake University is one of those journalism programs that in-the-know students, academics, and practitioners are well-aware of, even though Drake may not be a household name outside of Iowa and the Midwest. Running a lean operation in a media-savvy and media-consuming state like Iowa, which does not have a large population, ensures that Drake students will have as many internships as they would like while enrolled. Dean Richardson said that this reality helps lure serious journalism students to Des Moines, Iowa.

At the University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communications, Department Chair Ted Spiker said that the state of Florida is well known for being a model for having open records, meetings, and laws. The expected transparency of state interacts well with UF's College of Journalism and Communications. Aside from attracting students because of the program's reputation for imparting sound fundamental journalism skills, Spiker said that a big draw for a lot of journalism students is the amount of data journalism exposure and new-skill development they can have while enrolled.

> We have a faculty member who has spent the last several years developing a curriculum in data journalism, and we have three and four courses in coding that is attracting not just journalism majors, but students from other majors. We have

> a lot of data journalism, certainly one of the most robust programs in the country. … Because Florida is such a big open records and open government state, one of our required classes we offer is called "fact finding" and it's all about documents and records and finding trails that lead to stories. We hired a new lecturer that was the investigative editor for the Washington bureau of the AP [Associated Press]. I think it's also really important for students to know how to deliver stories on multiple platforms and in different ways (words, images, multimedia, numbers), and that's something else we're known for. It's not easy for universities to break down barriers. Twenty years ago, for instance, if you were to tell a journalism major that he or she would need to have advertising classes, that person might say, "no!" But these days, to promote a story, it's probably a good thing to understand. We position our curriculum so that having skills in a variety of communications methods wouldn't be a bad thing. That's another thing we're known for: Variety and a robust curriculum covering foundational skills, new technologies, and opportunities across departments. - Department Chair Ted Spiker, College of Journalism and Communications, University of Florida

Another program that identifies itself with data journalism and coding is the College of Media at the University of Illinois. Professor Brant Houston serves as the chair in investigative and enterprise reporting at University of Illinois and said that there has never been a higher demand for students with computer assisted reporting and data

skills as there is right now. Houston, who spearheaded Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) for over a decade, said that he often receives calls from newsrooms looking for people with those skills. He said that although the first request of hiring editors recruiting recent graduates is for sound writing and reporting skills, the second most asked question is: What data skills do they have? That question is followed by a series of other questions: Can they move around the web? Can they design webpages? Do they know social media? Can they code?

The last question in particular – can they code? – is asked whether or not the hiring editor or the editor-in-chief can code. Houston said that the hiring editor will not know specifically what it means to code, s/he just knows that they want someone with that skill set.

> Illinois students resemble the Missouri method – practical experience. Good students are really good at getting internships. They're working at the *Daily Illini* (not affiliated with journalism school). Illinois people coming out of the undergrad program write, report, they have internships, and they are digital. We stress a combination of practicality and theory. Illinois journalism students know data. Most of the best students know how to code as well. I get a lot of requests for students who know Python. The second most requested coding skill is R. – Professor Brant Houston, College of Media, University of Illinois

Furthermore, Houston said that he has advice for academic administrators that he believes will help them make journalism students marketable upon graduation, like some of the students from the University of Illinois. “If you want to produce a sound student to get into journalism at a higher level quickly, they need to know not only how to do stories, but how to do distribution; they have to have basic data analysis skills and understand a bit of coding – enough to do things like web scraping and cleaning of data. They can specialize in more but they should understand the basics of data visualization.”

Because various accredited journalism programs have similar core curriculum offerings, one of the distinguishable characteristics of various programs is how they operate within the ACEJMC parameters. At the University of Illinois, Professor Brant Houston said that Illini journalism students will graduate knowing how to scrub and analyze data, and they will be able to write basic code. Many journalism programs, including those appearing in this research, provide data analysis and coding courses as electives. According to Professor Houston, Illinois allocated a good number of resources for the pursuit of analytics.

Why a journalism degree is a valuable degree for a recent graduate

The last scripted question for academic administrators asked them to qualify whether or not a journalism degree was still valuable or whether it had become obsolete as the media landscape continues to change and evolve. All academic administrators (n=16) said that journalism does still have a place in college and university education.

The various terms and expressions they used to qualify why journalism was still a viable major or concentration were “truth” or “honesty” or “integrity” or “free press” at 100 percent; “communication” or “communication skills” or “writing skills” or “verbal skills” at 88 percent (n=14).

Two administrators provided answers that were decidedly different than those of the other administrators but worth noting. One administrator from a school with a journalism concentration within a larger department said he believes journalism skills are valuable but does not believe actual journalism schools are necessary. Another administrator said that a journalism degree is relevant because the critical thinking it teaches is a way of training students how to be self-employed and not beholden to a corporation for a career.

Dr. Debora Wenger is an assistant dean in the School of Journalism and New Media at the University of Mississippi. Her research specialization is journalism in the digital world and media management. She said in addition to writing and communication skills, transformational skills a student learns in journalism school make the degree a practical one for when they enter the profession.

> Students self-select. So to answer this question, I’ll say that I think based on foundational and transformational skills, foundational skills are still valued in the profession and we believe that they’re critical. They are a major part of the experience. Writing nearly always bubbles up to the top of the list whether you’re talking to editors or educators. What frustrates me is that writing is way

> more diverse and nuanced than ever before. When you say "writing," people know what they're thinking of writing to mean: writing for print or writing for online or writing for broadcast, but they may not all be defining it in the same way. ... Here at the University of Mississippi, we require our students to learn how to take photographs and to produce video, so those transformational skills are important and data skills are emerging as valuable. We're seeing in job postings in legacy newspaper companies that they're looking for those transformational skills on top of the writing, reporting, and research skills … all of which make a journalism degree have value. – Assistant Dean Dr. Debora Wenger, School of Journalism and New Media, University of Mississippi

At Texas Christian University's Bob Schieffer College of Communication, Journalism Chair Dr. Uche Onyebadi said he understands why journalism schools' and journalism degrees' practicability have been questioned in recent years. TCU's Schieffer College of Communication adapted in kind, and Dr. Onyebadi introduced a new curriculum in 2017 that incorporates a capstone called the Signature Learning Activity. This activity, he said, adds value to a journalism degree because it allows students to have interaction with alumni peers and undergo a peer review while still enrolled, which in turn leads to internships and jobs. In that regard, he said, a journalism degree offers practical experience but also leads to valuable industry connections.

"With this degree, you don't have to be a prisoner to a job and you don't have to send out 500 applications when you graduate," said Journalism Chair Dr. Uche

Onyebadi from the Bob Schieffer College of Communication at Texas Christian University.

In the Department of Media, Journalism & Film in the College of Arts and Sciences at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, former Department of Media Chair Dr. Richard Campbell said that despite Miami's reputation internationally as a journalism program that feeds newspapers with solid reporters, only one third of Miami's 200-plus journalism concentration majors want to go into print journalism. The other two thirds are spread among business and public relations studies and television. As a result, Dr. Campbell does not believe that the historical principles of journalism schools apply to Miami University journalism students, because they're not in a professional journalism school but in a liberal arts school. His commitment, he said, it more about a broad education and seeing students graduate with a double major. Additionally, he doesn't believe that any department inside of larger schools of communication necessarily equip students with the tools they need to succeed in the legacy print journalism industry and, to a similar extent, in print journalism in general. He believes that a journalism degree, or a liberal arts degree with a concentration in journalism – like Miami University's – is valuable because of the general interest and interdisciplinary education it promotes. Additionally, a double-major is required for a degree at Miami.

> We're not a professional journalism school, we're an arts and science college so a lot of our journalism majors are similar to history majors: they want to know about journalism and they want to write better but they don't necessarily want to

> be reporters. We're not an accredited school, so that gives us flexibility. College students benefit a lot by doing internships and doing a lot of projects. But they need a broad education and they need to be interested in stuff. Our students have an idea already of what they want to do but want to remain flexible. … This is why I'm critical of professional journalism schools: It's hard for them to change. When you're working with a lot of people that haven't been entrenched for years and years and years, I think the future for them is a lot like the past. I never worry about students finding jobs. People always want stories. That's never going to change. That's what makes our degree valuable. We're a culture that demands storytelling. – Chair Dr. Richard Campbell, Department of Media, Journalism & Film, Miami University

The school that Dr. Campbell from Miami University mentioned as a competitor is Ohio University's E.W. Scripps School of Journalism. Long a bastion of journalism education in the state of Ohio and the surrounding region, Ohio University's Scripps was founded in 1924 and has been turning out newspaper journalists for 95 years.

At Scripps, journalism students receive journalism education from the day they start class to the day they graduate. That is due, in part, because they are admitted directly into the journalism school as freshmen, rather than needing to apply into the school from the general college their junior year, like many historic journalism schools. Dean Dr. Scott Titsworth recognized that while the workload is strenuous and at times daunting, Ohio University Scripps students learn the craft by virtue of doing on day-

one. Part of what makes a journalism degree from Ohio University Scripps valuable is that students have four years to hone their skills and learn their craft.

> Starting on the first day of their first year of college, we are teaching them blue-collar journalism skills. That means we're teaching them how to listen well, write well, and tell a good story. That sentimental aspect is still really important for journalism graduates and hasn't changed. What has changed is that the tools that students need are more complex. It's no longer writing for a single medium. At Scripps, you'll be writing traditional print but also for social media and looking for additional ways to put your narrative out there. These are new skills that students need to understand because these days, there's such a convergence. … I think that technology has become more ubiquitous. It's not about being glitzy with the iPhone; it reverts back to being a great journalist and the technology will follow. The lines of delineation are all but meaningless. – Dean Scott Titsworth, Scripps College of Communication, Ohio University

Dr. Donica Mensing from the Reynolds School of Journalism at the University of Nevada, Reno, said that she thinks a journalism degree is valuable, and although she believes that UNR journalism graduates are prepared for any jobs in journalism, she questions whether legacy newspapers have the attractive powers they once did for current students, and whether jobs in a legacy newspaper newsroom generate the necessary environment to harness staying power for recent graduate new hires.

> I still think there's an important future for journalism graduates, though I don't know what kind of future exists for newspapers. I do believe that communities need news. Yesterday, there was a misspelling in a headline on the front page of our local paper. I was going to tweet it but I didn't because I felt bad and didn't want to beat up on them. We need local news. We're in this transition period. What's dying is dying faster than what will come next. ... I'm not sure it will be an Elon Musk, who has done a lot for Reno, that will save newspapers. Or even a [Jeff] Bezos. What the next phase of local news will be, I don't know. I view that separate from whether journalism students have a future. - Assistant Dean Donica Mensing, Reynolds School of Journalism, University of Nevada, Reno

All journalism academic administrators interviewed in this section (n=16) said that journalism does still have a place in college and university education. The various terms and expressions they used to qualify why journalism was still a viable major or concentration were "truth" or "honesty" or "integrity" or "free press" at 100 percent; "communication" or "communication skills" or "writing skills" or "verbal skills" at 88 percent (n=14). An important underpinning of various journalism academic administrators was that there is a noticeable downward turn in the quality of local newspaper writing and reporting. However, recognizing that newspapers are struggling, no proposals for a new newspaper business model were recommended, nor was there any indication that research in conjunction with any business schools is in the works at

the various universities to help fix the newspaper readership and circulation – and by proxy, reputation/reliability – problem.

Other interview findings: lack of academy/industry communication

Similar to the opinions of legacy newspaper hiring editors, academic administrators agree that there is a lack of communication between the two actors in regards to the academy extending or adapting curriculum around industry wants and needs. Of the 16 academic administrators in journalism schools and programs interviewed for this research, 94 percent (n=15) said there is a disconnect, either real or perceived. Fifty percent of administrators (n=8) said that the conversations they have with legacy newspaper hiring editors are centered around particular recruits or general questions about the aptitudes of students who are about to graduate. Fifty percent of the academic administrators (n=8) made comments to the effect that legacy newspaper hiring editors do not believe the academy can help them with their readership and circulation numbers. All administrators interviewed (n=16) said that the newspaper industry is in "trouble" or is "struggling" or is "dying", despite some newspapers showing circulation gains and increased readership. One dean made a singular point that even though journalism schools on the micro level and universities on the macro level are inclined to be the perfect environment for legacy newspaper hiring editors to run experiments on what they can do to attract readers in the coveted 18-to-54-year-old demographic, the fact that they do not is a missed opportunity. One administrator said that the academy is too slow to change and adapt, which is why legacy newspaper

hiring editors, forced to change on the fly since the internet revolution, do not have time to wait for the academy to research and publish findings or initiatives.

> There are a couple of things that academia brings to a dialogue with newspaper editors: 1) The audience we're working with is the audience these media companies need to be able to reach in order to increase their circulation; 2) We're already set up to test things. We can run experiments to realize what works and why it works. That ongoing dialogue is necessary but for whatever reason, it is challenging. I don't think the relationship will be fixed in a couple meeting before a conference or by getting a small group of big wigs and academics together for a dinner in New York. It has to be more systematic than that so we can find academic professional partnerships. – Dean Scott Titsworth, E. W. Scripps School of Journalism, Ohio University

Professor Brian McDermott at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, acknowledged that there is tension between the industry and journalism schools.

> There's a weird relationship, I think it's fair to say, between journalism education and working journalists. There's sometimes a disconnect between journalism education and working journalists, which is a shame. Some journalists seem to view journalism education as frivolous because they themselves didn't study journalism in college.

Dr. Debora Wenger from the School of Journalism and New Media at the University of Mississippi said that the disconnect between industry and academy, real or perceived, is nothing new, and as such, historically speaking, there is little chance for the two entities to completely resolve their differences and opinions – real or perceived – of each other. In effect, she said that not even divine intervention could satisfy the multiple requirements legacy newspaper hiring managers have of recent journalism school graduates.

> If there's a disconnect between the industry and the academy, it's been around forever. I did some research about the complaints of practitioners in the 1920s and back then it was "you're a lousy writer." That's never going to go away. But if you look at a typical job posting for a journalism student these days, I'm not sure Jesus could meet all those requirements. – Dr. Debora Wenger, School of Journalism and New Media, University of Mississippi

Dr. Wenger acknowledged that although there is plenty of finger pointing that goes on between the academy and the industry, she openly points a finger at the academy from within the academy. "To some extent, the same hierarchical analogy plays out in an academic setting," she said. "Many journalism educators, myself included, haven't worked in a newsroom for 10 years so they need to make sure they're interacting with the profession and reading anything they can find. Academics can get really myopic."

Summary: Academic administrators results from research questions

This semi-structured qualitative interviewing format yielded some patterns that explain what academic administrators view as the benchmarks of a quality journalism education.

Administrators from the various colleges and universities who participated in this research indicated that the following terms were of the highest priority for a journalism student to learn: ethics/values/communications law100 percent (n=16); news skills/writing/reporting 100 percent (n=16); curiosity/analysis/synthesis/critical thinking 81 percent (n=13); technology/social media/coding/multimedia 75 percent (n=12). The majority of journalism academic administrators interviewed said internships/externships/experiential learning (n=15), or 94 percent were the most important element of a journalism education as it pertains to attracting employment opportunities upon graduation. Of those 15 academic administrators, 73 percent said that they would consider involvement in the student newspaper to fulfill the internship and clip criteria. In addition, 81 percent (n=13) used the term "clips" to describe a successful academic career in journalism. One academic administrator replied that a student's GPA was the most important element of his or her academic career, and none of the respondents said extracurricular activities/campus involvement (explained to those who asked for a qualifier as student government, student clubs, fraternity/sorority life, athletics, or some additional activity that does not count toward a degree).

Descriptors used by academic administrators to define a university's program or a department's distinguishing impact on a journalism student were "experience" (n=12), "opportunities" (n=10), "learning" or "learning laboratory" (n=7), "empowering" (n=4), "real" (n=3), and two administrators said their journalism programs are renowned for "data journalism" and "coding" (n=2). One administrator said "winning" was the distinguishing impact on recent graduates (n=1).

The various terms and expressions academic administrators used to qualify why journalism was still a viable major or concentration were "truth" or "honesty" or "integrity" or "free press" at 100 percent; "communication" or "communication skills" or "writing skills" or "verbal skills" at 88 percent (n=14).

Ninety-four percent (n=15) of academic administrators said there is a disconnect, either real or perceived, between the academy and the newspaper industry. Fifty percent of administrators (n=8) said that the conversations they have with legacy newspaper hiring editors are centered around particular recruits or general questions about the students' aptitudes who are about to graduate. Fifty percent of the academic administrators (n=8) made comments to the effect that legacy newspaper hiring editors do not believe the academy can help them with their readership, business model and/or circulation numbers. All administrators interviewed (n=16) said that the newspaper industry is in "trouble" or is "struggling" or is "dying" (see Appendix 12, Table 6).

Chapter 8: Discussion, Limitations, Conclusion

This final chapter synthesizes results from the two groups of professionals interviewed: legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism school academic administrators. The eight broad scripted research questions guided the qualitative process, and the semi-structured in-depth interviewing method allowed for new questions to arise, and for patterns to be detected. Grounded theory brought the subjects to life by providing a framework through which the legacy newspaper hiring editors and the academic administrators could communicate their observations, perceptions, predictions, and emotions, and by which the researcher could then reassemble the data into a coherent structure. Grounded theory as an approach also enabled me to consider various theories from other social sciences, like educational psychology's social cognitive theory.

For the legacy newspaper managers who are redefining the roles of reporters in an era of ever-changing job descriptions and skill sets, and for the academic administrator looking to stay ahead of the academic curve and produce innovative courses, the theoretical lens through which this study is viewed is social cognitive theory with an emphasis on self-efficacy. Self-efficacy, a key element in social cognitive theory, is hypothesized to influence behaviors while taking into account environment and, in turn, to be affected by it (Schunk & Pajares, 2009).

Self-efficacy determines whether an individual will be able to demonstrate coping behavior and how long that individual will sustain his or her effort in the face of

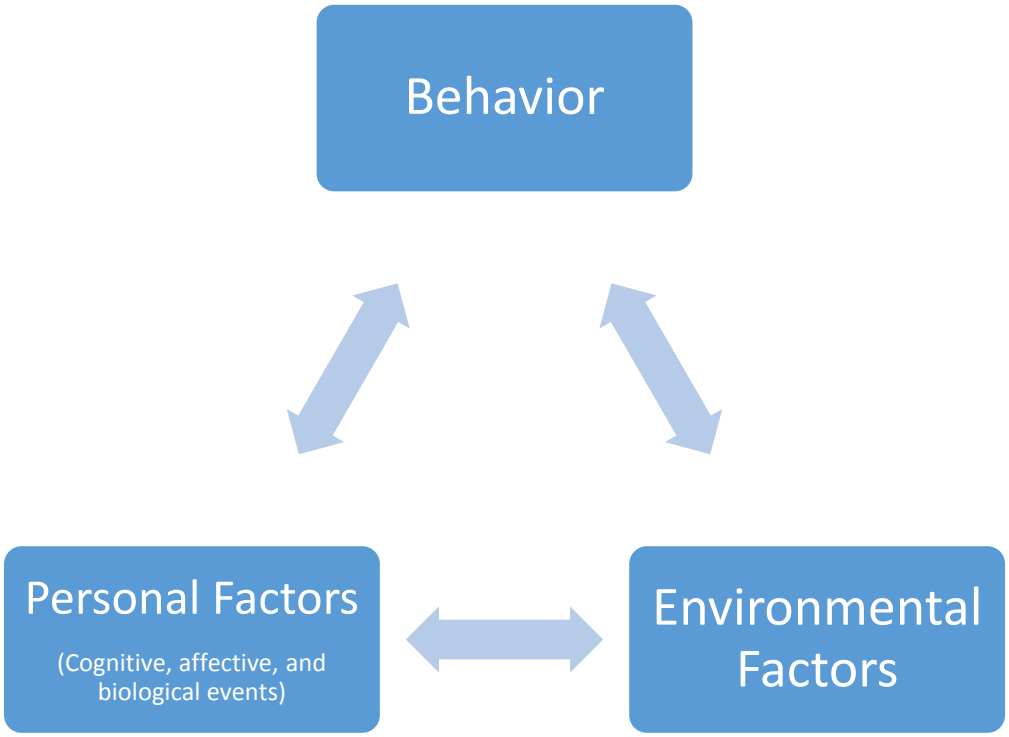
obstacles (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998; Braskamp, Trautvetter, & Ward, 2016). Empirical research (van Dinther, Dochy, & Segers, 2011) shows that educational programs have the possibility to enhance students' self-efficacy and that educational programs based on social cognitive theory proved to be particularly successful. Moreover, Maier and Curtin (2005) conducted a case study that surmised that self-efficacy theory is a prescriptive model for anxiety and that it helped journalists and journalism students overcome a performance gap with other newsroom professionals and recent graduate new hires in research methods courses. Journalism students who employed self-efficacy and sought out additional help with their research methods studies reported feeling less anxious and scored better than students who did not (Maier & Curtin, 2005).

This is particularly important when examining students' motivation to seek out experiential learning or internships while enrolled in college. Specifically, this is important when neither is required to graduate because seeking out experiential learning opportunities when a student does not have to speaks to the integrity and seriousness of the journalism student (Wenger & Owens, 2012). The student, in essence, is going above and beyond the expectations of the journalism school, or at the very least, of the journalism schools that do not require an internship/externship to graduate.

As it pertains to a newsroom reporter as well as a hiring/newsroom manager, self-efficacy can be broken down by a diagram (see Figure 7) to help explain how three factors (environment, behavior and personal events) effect the learning process and therefore, how well they adapt to change. This figure helps to break down the

motivation of a student who seeks out additional work in the form of experiential learning when it is not required by the journalism program.

Figure 7: Self-efficacy theory chart showing the cyclical nature of an individual's effort in the face of obstacles



My job as the researcher was to code and analyze the interview data and to create meaning from this information so that I could more fully and clearly understand and assess the responses.

Analysis of the first set of participants, legacy newspaper hiring editors, produced a collective understanding of their wants of recent journalism school graduates. Regardless of the size of the newspaper and irrespective of the particular

position the interviewee held in the newsroom, various patterns emerged that may help academic administrators when setting a curriculum and preparing students who have a desire to go into legacy newspaper journalism.

Analysis of the second set of participants, journalism school academic administrators, produced a collective understanding of their expectations of soon-to-be and recent journalism school graduates. Regardless of the size of the university, and irrespective of whether they have their own school of journalism or whether journalism is a sequence in a larger department, various patters emerged that may help hiring editors understand what is principally being taught in America's journalism schools, and why administrators are putting emphasis on certain topics.

The discussion in this chapter begins with a review of the study's key findings and their connections to existing research on journalism academic administration and newspaper industry expectations of recent journalism school graduates. Then, this discussion section looks at the five theoretical lenses though which the study was viewed and determines whether the principles furthered the research and help with the conclusion. Finally, this discussion section details the study's limitations and provides suggestions for further research. The study's implications of these findings to journalism and a conclusion bring this chapter to a close.

Key research findings

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the intersection of legacy newspaper wants/needs from recent journalism school graduates and the curriculum

being curated and taught in American journalism schools and departments. The goal is to look deeper into newsroom management to see historically why they make new hires the way they have in the past and whether their implementation of the same hiring methods year after year is a reason for their reticence to change their hiring practices in the wake of the Internet age. More specifically, this dissertation looks deeper into why newspapers hire the way they do, where newspapers are headed, and what skills will be needed from employees to help ensure the longevity, vitality, and success of newspapers, as well as to examine how the academy has adapted to the changing news landscape and changing delivery mechanisms of news and information.

This research is particularly important in contemporary American society because of the institutional attacks on the free press from the political and business communities. Most concerning is the rhetoric coming out of the highest elected office in the United States, as the President and his cabinet routinely attack the news media and condemn its collective reporting, calling it "fake news" (Anderson, 2018). Much like the Watergate break-in and the ensuing investigation by the *Washington Post* prompted a new generation of high school students to enroll in journalism school at colleges and universities, the President's deriding of the media is compelling high school students to flock to journalism schools (Anderson, 2018). For newspapers to maintain their credibility and for them to be widely accepted – as they have over time – as the first drafts of history, it is imperative that newspaper hiring editors and journalism academic administrators have dialog about what needs to be taught, in what frequency, and why. In the conversation, a renewed emphasis on ethics needs to occur, as newspaper hiring

editors did not raise concerns of ethics being taught in journalism school nearly as much as they did writing and reporting. Perhaps it is because hiring editors cannot edit ethics like they can copy, so there is a presumption that students graduating from journalism school received a sound dose of ethics while enrollee, and that ethical codes do not need to be screened in an interview the same way writing and reporting do. However, until the two camps have a conversation about ethics and its place in journalism curriculum, this point cannot be addressed with data. This issue has global implications, and it not reserved for American newsrooms and classrooms. Rather, research shows that globally, the juxtaposition of how the media is perceived and what is being taught to young journalists is questioned all over the world (Goodman & Steyn, 2017).

The research shows that while there is some overlap of desired skills and taught skills, there is also a disconnect regarding what hiring editors consider most important in their new hires and what is being taught in the classroom (see Appendix 8, Table 4). Additionally, while both legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism academic administrators agree that internships/externships/experiential learning opportunities and clips are critical components when deeming a recent graduate hirable, and notwithstanding the fact that this knowledge is not new, it is worth noting that internships/externships/experiential learning are only part of a required curriculum at 37 percent of the programs that appear in this study (n=6). Although that particular kernel of knowledge has been around since 1985 when Kolb originally introduced the Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), the pattern detected in this study is that journalism schools do not require experiential learning to graduate (Kolb, 2014). Experiential

Learning Theory (ELT) states that the experience should be at the center of the learning process (2014). This means that because hiring editors believe that experiential learning is the top priority of a new hire and academic administrators believe by a 94 percent margin that it is important, some form of internship/externship/experiential learning should be a requirement for a journalism degree. This is the first study to consider a ranking of the importance of experiential learning, grade point average, and extra curricular activities. The only prior study showing any kind of ranking of priorities places by a hiring editor on a new hire came almost two decades ago. A study from 2000 showed that editors ranked having a "high GPA" the third-most important quality in a beginning journalist, behind first-place finisher "knowledge of international affairs" and second-place finisher "knowledge of a second language" (Dickson & Brandon, 2000). Writing and reporting did not appear, perhaps because that was the primary expectation of journalism school graduates and therefore, it was considered a given. However, almost two decades later, writing and reporting are no longer a given, according to legacy newspaper hiring editors.

Experiential learning and extracurricular activities did not register. This revelation that both groups consider experiential learning a primary tenet yet it is not a requirement for a journalism degree not only demands further scientific research on the topic, but it should be considered as a requirement for ACEJMC accreditation.

Another interesting finding that arose from this study – from both the hiring editor and journalism academic administrators' perspectives – is that a disconnect does exist between legacy newspaper hiring editors and academic administrators. While this

was perceived for a long time, no data empirically measures this disconnect, and no qualitative study examines it. Using grounded theory, this research was able to delve deeper into the relationship between hiring editors and academic administrators. This disconnect was exposed through the organic conversations that ensued based on the semi-structured qualitative research method that used grounded theory as the theoretical framework.

The primary goal of grounded theory is to find emerging patterns. Through the wide lens of grounded theory, I located additional theoretical concerns.

The majority of both legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism school academic administrators agree that communication lines need to be improved, and one dean suggested that newspaper management should partner with journalism schools to conduct research on students to determine what information they want to read in print and online that will help sustain the struggling newspaper industry.

Part of the disconnect may arise from the disparity between what hiring editors are looking for and what academic administrator's programs are teaching. While both parties agree that writing and reporting are among the top skills needed when coming out of a journalism program, the amount of formal digital and social media training is at odds with industry priorities. Additionally, the perception on the part of academics that newspaper management is not adapting with the times, and the perception on the part of newspaper management that academics are teaching a curriculum that is no longer practical could be why there is a disconnect between the two groups. Regardless, the research from this dissertation points to the fact that newspaper hiring editors do not

feel academic administrators are taking the time to reach out and ask what they can do to help tailor a newspaper curriculum or newspaper sequence to address industry concerns. Similarly, the research from this dissertation points to another fact, which is journalism academic administrators feel that legacy newspaper hiring editors are not asking for the help they need. Essentially, the administrators believe that legacy newspaper management are not actively reaching out and seeking the help of scholars and other researches, which can be provided by their regional university's journalism and mass communications' departments. The help scholars can offer, according to this research, is to assist in increasing readership, ethics, and to provide other innovative changes that will positively affect the legacy newspaper industry's collective bottom line. This can be done by establishing partnerships between local legacy newspapers and journalism programs in the city (or surrounding communities) of the university. That way, upperclassmen can learn by doing while in journalism school. Moreover, the onus would not be on the student to independently seek out experiential learning opportunities outside of class. Students considering a career in newspaper journalism would utilize a teaching hospital model for college credit and. Therefore, no undue hardship would be placed on students who are involved with school-related extracurricular activities, or on students who are forced to work day-or-night jobs while enrolled in classes in order to survive. In essence, there would be no excuse for a student not to have experience at a newspaper, as having that experience would be a prerequisite to graduate.

Data synthesis and answers to research questions

This dissertation addressed two overall themes: What are the skills that make a college graduate attractive to a legacy newspaper hiring editor, and what skills is the academy teaching students to help them ready themselves for careers in daily newspaper journalism? From these two themes came eight prevailing research questions that were foundations of this study. The first four questions (RQ 1, RQ 1-2, RQ 1-3, RQ 1-4) dealt with the legacy newspaper industry and the various criteria placed on recent journalism school graduates. The second four questions (RQ 2, RQ 2-2, RQ 2-3, RQ 2-4) dealt with the administrators at journalism schools and departments, and those who are tasked shaping the journalism curriculum.

The questions were not mirror images of each other per se, although there was similar language to corresponding questions from both sides. When RQ 1 and RQ 2 are put side by side, the intersection of industry wants and academy instructions becomes clearer, and a conclusion can be drawn. The same juxtaposition applies with RQ 1-4 and RQ 2-2, RQ 1-3 and RQ 2-3, and RQ 1-2 and RQ 2-4.

The first coupling of questions to be synthesized is RQ 1 and RQ 2. They state the following:

RQ 1: What are the most important qualities a legacy newspaper hiring editor requires from a recent college graduate new hire?

RQ 2: What are the most important tenets and skills that journalism school administrators believe students need to learn by the time they graduate journalism school?

These questions seek to find what both groups consider to be the most important skills and qualities in a recent journalism school graduate.

On the legacy newspaper side, all 14 hiring managers from all 14 newspapers, whose daily circulations ranged from 9,000 to 327,000, and whose geographic locations accounted for all U.S. regions, pointed to writing and reporting as being the most important qualities of a recent journalism school graduate new hire. They felt that these skills, which are the traditional blue-collar journalism skills historically taught in journalism programs, have not been taught as much or as well as in the past, and they point to the decline in aptitude of recent journalism school graduate applicants as the ruler by which they measure students year over year. The management experience (i.e., number of years on the job as a manager of people) of the hiring editors ranged from 10 years to 50 years, which put them in a good position to make emphatic statements about aptitudes and skills based on observations over time. In addition to the blue-collar writing and reporting skills, 86 percent of the hiring editors responded by saying that certain intangible qualities – adaptability, curiosity, hit-the-ground-running motivation, self-starter, go-getter – round out a reporter's skill set, and these skills were as sought after as the tangible qualities like writing, reporting, research, and presentation (see Appendix 8, Table 4). Surprisingly, the responses from a majority of the hiring editors did not indicate web-specific tasks or advanced social media skills.

On the journalism academic administrator side, the 16 journalism school administrators who participated in this research listed a range of different skills as most

important for students to learn in the pursuit of a journalism degree. Those skills that tracked at the top were ones that used the following terms: ethics/values/communications law 100 percent (n=16); news skills/writing/reporting 100 percent (n=16); curiosity/analysis/synthesis/critical thinking 81 percent (n=13); technology/social media/coding/multimedia 75 percent (n=12).

It can be concluded that across the aisle, both legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism academic administrators agreed that writing and reporting skills (a.k.a. "blue-collar skills" by the industry and "news skills" by the academy) are the most important. Both groups also put a premium on self-motivating and critical-thinking skills. The second-most important skill set considered by hiring editors is adaptability, curiosity, hit-the-ground-running, or a derivative of that language. This was also the second-most requested skill set of academic administrators.

After that, there is a discrepancy between the two groups as to what skills constitute the most important. Indeed, all of the skills mentioned are considered to be important by the industry and the academy, but RQ 1 and RQ 2 specifically asked for the *most important skills* that a recent journalism school graduate must possess to be an attractive new-hire to a legacy newspaper.

The journalism academic administrators had another set of terms that tied for first regarding skills that are most necessary for recent graduates. Tied for first on the academic administrator side with news skills were ethics/values/communications law at 100 percent (n=16). Legacy newspaper hiring editors often mentioned ethics in their

answers to other questions, but when directly questioned about the *most* important skills, only one of them (n=1) indicated ethics as the most important skill. Additionally, 75 percent of academic administrators (n=12) said that technology/social media/coding/multimedia were the most important skill set. None of the legacy hiring editors used any of these terms to describe the most important skill set of a recent journalism school graduate new hire.

The second coupling of questions to be synthesized is RQ 1-4 and RQ 2-2. They state the following:

RQ 1-4: How much weight is placed on extracurricular activities? How much on grades? How much on internships?

RQ 2-2: By what parallel skills and qualities (grades, participation, outside experience [internships/externships]) do administrators define a successful academic career?

The question of legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism academic administrators (RQ 1-4, RQ 2-2) determined what hierarchy was placed on all activities that a journalism student undertook while enrolled. By ranking/prioritizing them, or by prioritizing them, the reader can see whether there was a shift in mentality on the part of the hiring editor or the academy from previous research that studied hierarchy. A study from 2000 showed that editors ranked having a "high GPA" the third-most important quality in a beginning journalist, behind first-place finisher "knowledge of international affairs" and second-place finisher "knowledge of a second language" (Dickson &

Brandon, 2000). The study said: "The longer the editor had worked in the news media, the more important he/she thought the student's grade point average was, and females were more likely to see high GPA as being important" (Dickson & Brandon, 2000, p. 52). No similar data exists for the hierarchy of activities as considered by an academic administrator. These results were a first on the academy side.

Hiring editors unanimously stated that when considering a candidate for his or her first journalism job out of college, they put the most weight and emphasis on clips written by journalism school students while enrolled, and on internships performed by recent journalism school graduates either while enrolled or immediately upon graduation. When asked to put in order the importance of a recent journalism school graduate having good grades, good clips, one or more internships/externships/experiential learning, or extracurricular activities before that student was hired, the results were as follows: Clips and internships/externships/experiential learning were cited 100 percent of the time as being most important, grades and extracurricular activities tied for second place, with 50 percent of hiring editors saying grades were second most important and 50 percent saying campus involvement/extracurricular activities were second most important.

On the academic administrator side, the majority of journalism academic administrators interviewed, 94 percent, said internships/externships/experiential learning (n=15) were the most important. One administrator said GPA was the most important. Regarding the second place category, among academic administrators, GPA tracked slightly higher (n=8) than extracurricular activities/campus involvement. These

results differ from quantitative data that was produced at the turn of the 21st century. A study from 2000 showed that editors ranked having a "high GPA" the third-most important quality in a beginning journalist, behind first-place finisher "knowledge of international affairs" and second-place finisher "knowledge of a second language" (Dickson & Brandon, 2000). The study said: "The longer the editor had worked in the news media, the more important he/she thought the student's grade point average was, and females were more likely to see high GPA as being important" (Dickson & Brandon, 2000, p. 52).

It can be concluded that across the aisle, both legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism academic administrators agreed that clips and internships/externships/extracurricular activities are the most important experience for a recent journalism school new hire. Among the combined groups, GPA finished a distant second, and extracurricular activities third. The reason this may surprise some readers is that although internship experience and clips tracked highest, most of journalism programs in this study do not make either element mandatory to graduate.

The third coupling of questions to be synthesized is RQ 1-2 and RQ 2-3. They state the following:

RQ 1-2: Against and within what master narratives do hiring editors anticipate the industry's needs from recent graduates at this very moment?

RQ 2-3: What distinguishes academic administrators' graduating students

from those of other programs to make their graduating student attractive to a newspaper hiring editor?

This question of legacy newspaper hiring editors (RQ 1-2) determined what place and role recent journalism school graduates played in moving newspaper journalism forward. This question was aimed at determining if there was an expectation of recent graduates that they possess a skill set or aptitude that was not historically required of recent graduates before the Internet revolution (i.e., digital skills, interdisciplinary skills). Moreover, this question is anthropological in nature, as it looks at a snapshot in time of what legacy newspaper hiring editors expect from their journalism school new hires.

Their answers when juxtaposed with RQ 2-3 of academic administrators illustrates what those administrators think are the most distinguishable qualities of their programs. If the distinguishable qualities of a journalism school's program are the same as the industry's needs from a new hire, then the industry and the academy, despite little communication with each other about curriculum, have an intersection of consequence for journalism students to consider (see Appendix 8, Table 4).

Hiring editors indicated an interesting mix of current needs after writing and reporting, which were the most important. The most needed skills were business reporting (3 editors), photography (3 editors), investigative reporting (3 editors), multi-media skills (2 editors), team reporting (1 editor). Collectively, these skills very closely match the contemporary curriculum taught in journalism schools across the country, including the ones that appeared in this research.

The 16 academic administrators pointed to varying characteristics that distinguish their programs from other journalism schools and departments. Descriptors they used to define their program or a department's distinguishing impact on a journalism student were "experience" (n=12), "opportunities" (n=10), "learning" or "learning laboratory" (n=7), "empowering" (n=4), "real" (n=3), and two administrators said their journalism programs are most well-known for "data journalism" and "coding" (n=2), and one administrator said "winning" (n=1).

While the language and terminology is not exact, the "experience," "opportunity," and "learning laboratory" descriptors by academic administrators triangulate nicely with the needs of the industry, for all of the requests on the part of the hiring editors are under the umbrella of the administrator's terminology. A surprise from this coupling of questions is that while "data journalism" and "coding" showed up on the academic administrator's side, those needs were not identified as crucial by the industry. Also unanticipated is that hiring editors did not identify needing nuanced social media or digital journalism skills from recent graduates. These skills are large parts of journalism school curriculum in contemporary times. Those skills are absent from the hiring editors' lists because according to five hiring editors, they presume that any new-hire already have those skills before they even get to journalism school. That is because recent graduates were born in a digital age. As a result, they are already well-steeped in operating social media and apps by the time they get to college, and they are internet savvy.

The fourth coupling of questions to be synthesized is RQ 1-3 and RQ 2-4. They state the following:

RQ 1-3: How important is it for a student to have a lot of depth in research and reporting versus production skills upon graduation?

RQ 2-4: What do these parallel skills and qualities say about the collective value that journalism school administrators place on a journalism degree above any other degree that makes a journalism school graduate hirable?

These questions sought to determine if production skills, long a skill set that was not taught in journalism, were now part of a necessary requirement that hiring editors expect of their new hires (because newsrooms are shrinking and employees are assuming multiple roles). The answers to this question then intersect with why academic administrators believe a journalism degree is still valuable.

Production skills are competences that enhance a story and that produce a well-rounded, packaged story. For instance, photography, audio/video skills, digital platforms, and coding are considered production skill. Because journalism programs were historically siloed for much of the 19th and 20th centuries, it was uncommon for a journalism student to deviate from a specified track (news/editorial/ broadcast, advertising/PR).

All academic administrators (n=16) indicated that their graduates receive a much more interdisciplinary education in contemporary American society than they have in year's past.

Theoretical applications

Although conceived more than 70 years ago, the contemporary American newsroom could stand to learn a lot from Lewin's field theory (Lewin, 1946; Burnes, 2004).

The 2019 American newsroom is still a hierarchical top-town management-heavy structure. Recognizing that change is difficult, especially considering that the majority of legacy newspaper newsrooms are still controlled and operated by people who were hired as reporters and promoted based on hard work and merit and not because of any particular management skill sets, hinders the 3-step model (Chan-Olmstead, 2006; Ekdale et al., 2015). Hiring journalists because they can write and report is a tried and true measure of professional success (Wenger, 2018). However, if managers, who make decisions for the newsroom majority and the rank-and-file staff and personnel, could unfreeze the newsroom by recognizing that readership is down, circulation is down, and revenue is down so something has got to change. Then they can implement some changes by way of hiring students with different skill sets other than the traditional ones they are looking for, including students with double majors and with data and/or coding skills. The newsroom can be refrozen with a new workforce raised, shaped, and trained in a 21st century digital forge.

Moreover, Lewin's field theory considers the group's present situation, the dangers, and most importantly, how they should be addressed through action research theory (Burnes, 2004). From a longevity standpoint, newspapers that are losing money

are not going to survive. By now, newspapers should have an idea of the proper balance of online and print content, or at least enough of an understanding of readership dynamics and demographics to run an operation that is profitable (Gade, 2011).

Newspaper management can address this issue by partnering with their regional university journalism and mass communications programs and tap them to do research on the key 18-to-54 demographic. Journalism and mass communications programs are equipped to run experiments and conduct research that will determine the expectation that current and potential readers have of legacy newspapers. If they were to survey a random sample of college-age students on what they expect from a legacy newspaper, the results could help newspaper managers and editors address their needs and crate content targeting this digitally-reared population.

Other research that can be conducted will analyze what current readers and potential readers want to see changed in the product or the culture of newspapers so that they may either maintain or become subscribers. A significant amount of this marketing research is currently conducted by private companies on behalf of newspapers and other publishing groups (Sriram et al, 2015). However, journalism schools and communications/mass communications programs are working laboratories that can study newspapers and their current and prospective readers in order to identify emerging demographic patterns. Additionally, this research partnership with regional universities pursuing the study of the local newspaper's readership and editorial direction will have a secondary effect of opening lines of communication between newspaper management and journalism academic administrators. These lines of

communication will double as a feeder program for a journalism school's best and brightest students into the legacy newspaper's newsrooms that they worked alongside upon graduation. That is one way to begin an ongoing dialogue.

For the academy, the theoretical lens through which this study was viewed was Astin's theory of student involvement (Astin, 1984; Braskamp, Trautvetter, & Ward, 2016). Astin's theory of student involvement states that a student who is socialized with campus goings-on and who involves himself/herself with as much academically-oriented work both on and off campus will be the more well-rounded student and will receive the broadest type of college education (1984). Essentially, the more work a student does outside of the classroom, the more his or her experiences will help him/her both inside the classroom and with intellectual and personal development.

When considering the aforementioned research and the conclusions drawn from it, one will see that this theory is consistent with the opinions expressed by both hiring editors and academic administrators alike: Having experience (internships/externship/experiential learning, including the student newspaper) makes a recent journalism school graduate more well-rounded. As an extension of that thought process, students who are more well-rounded than their classmates are more attractive to hiring editors, and are therefore more hirable.

Considering all parties involved agreed that experience is key, perhaps academic administrators can work with their local newspaper's management to schedule classes that will involve working on the community newspaper for college credit.

For the legacy newspaper reporter redefining his or her role in a newsroom-shrinking era of ever-changing job descriptions and skill sets, and for the academic administrator looking to stay ahead of the academic curve and produce innovative courses based on industry trends, the theoretical lens through which this study is viewed is social cognitive theory with an emphasis on self-efficacy. By this theoretical lens, consider an environment where the student can approach both a professor *and* a professional newspaper journalist for questions and concerns about academic teachings or industry decisions. That student will, in effect, have the best of both worlds. What's more, consider an environment where a student can be a part of a curriculum planning meeting and a newspaper story budget meeting. Social cognitive theory and self-efficacy can have tremendous real-world applications, in the classroom and the newsroom, which would behoove the academy, the industry, and the student.

Whereas a quantitative study performed by Wenger (2018) provides that previous experience, writing, and web savvy are among the most attractive qualities for journalism hiring editors across the industry, similar qualitative research provided by this study confirms that those are three of the more popular attributes that legacy newspaper hiring editors are looking for from recent journalism school graduates. However, Wenger, who was also interviewed for this story, concluded in her quantitative study that leadership attributes were toward the bottom of the requested hiring criteria, whereas the at least half (n=7) of the hiring editors interviewed for this study put either leadership/management/business acumen, or some other form of

interdisciplinary skill set ahead of all others besides writing/reporting and experience/internships/clips.

Future research on journalism schools tracking highest among industry peers

A presumption explained in the literature review stated that a premium is being placed on journalism school graduates with an interdisciplinary education, or a knowledge base in some field other than only journalism. More research should be done to examine what specific fields legacy newspaper hiring editors are to and what knowledge from those fields they would like students to possess.

Additionally, this dissertation produced some interesting findings from the perspective of the industry regarding how newspaper hiring editors, the bulk of whom appeared on *Editor & Publisher*'s list of newspapers that are trending in the right direction, attain personnel. When academic administrators are considering courses to offer, they could look to the patterns of whom legacy newspapers are hiring and offer courses that address the demand. However, there needs to be an ongoing dialogue in order for this to happen.

Emerging from this study is a shortlist of journalism schools – independently mentioned by legacy newspaper hiring editors through the course of in-depth interviewing and not prompted by a survey or appearing as part of a content analysis – that are go-to sources for student recruitment.

The journalism schools mentioned in my in-depth interviews can be triangulated with the list of collegefactual.com's list of the top 70 journalism schools (out of 601

ranked programs) and with the methods and philosophies coming out of those schools. This research sent out query letters for academic administrators at the top 70 journalism schools in the country according to collegefactual.com. Some patterns that emerged through the use of grounded theory as they pertain to which journalism schools the hiring editors of the upward-trending legacy newspapers are hiring from shows that the most mentioned schools are: Northwestern University (n=5), University of Missouri (n=5), Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism (n=5), Ohio University (n=4), and the University of Texas at Austin (n=3). The collegefactual.com rankings of the aforementioned journalism schools, respectively, is as follows: #4 (Northwestern), #3 (Missouri), unranked (Columbia is a graduate program only, which disqualified it from collegefactual.com's list), #63 (Ohio University), and #2 (UT-Austin).

The legacy newspaper hiring editors represented daily circulations between 9,000 and more than 300,000. They also represented every geographic compass point in the United States. Considering the variances of circulation and geographic differences, the fact the journalism programs at five schools are mentioned with consistency indicates that the curriculum of these five schools should be analyzed. Future research could determine what about the curriculum of these five journalism programs distinguishes it from other programs in the country whereby a newspaper in California, considering the numerous colleges and universities in California, recruits their recent journalism school new hires from Athens, Ohio. Also, the faculty of these universities can be measured using the quantitative method of hierarchical multiple regression to determine the variables that distinguish their faculty and instructors from others,

including the ratio of PhDs to non-PhDs, and where the worked and studied before joining that particular university.

Ohio University Dean of Journalism Dr. Scott Titsworth is the academic administrator who recommended journalism schools usage as research hubs for legacy newspapers readership, circulation, and management woes and who encouraged a further long-lasting and sustainable dialogue between journalism school administrators and legacy newspaper hiring managers.

Additional research should be done comparing and contrasting accredited journalism programs from non-accredited programs. In this research, of the 16 journalism academic administrators interviewed, five were from non-accredited programs, or 31% (see Appendix 6, Table 2 for notations regarding which five schools in this research are not accredited). Sincere opinions were expressed by various journalism academic administrators in favor of and against the ACEJMC accreditation process. While there are mixed reviews on the part of administrators as to whether accreditation is necessary, none of the hiring editors expressed any interest in or concern for the accreditation status of the journalism programs that they hire their graduates from. According to my research, accreditation as a concern is limited to journalism academic administrators. Moreover, research as to whether ACEJMC accreditation is important to the parents of incoming journalism students should be done, as there are currently no studies that point to parents' opinions of ACEJMC accreditation.

Limitations

Grounded theory was conceived in the late 1960s by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Since that time, diverging concepts and understandings of grounded theory have led to a rift between the founders (Kelle, 2007). Glaser recommends that the researcher should draw on a variety of coding families – a more quantitative approach – while Strauss says the researcher should use general theory of action to build an axis for an emerging theory (Kelle, 2007). My belief is that the two converging opinions can coexist in research, and my use of grounded theory entailed coding families *and* general theory of action to not only build an axis for an emerging theory, but to use various theoretical lenses from other social science pursuits to better explain phenomena. However, a perceived limitation may arise from Glaser or Strauss partisans who disagree with my traditionalist, purist use of grounded theory.

As a qualitative study, although saturation was reached based on scholarly definitions of saturation (Dworkin, 2012), saturation is a concept that is still being debated. However, based on various scholarly definitions of saturation and when scholars maintain that saturation is met, interviews of both legacy newspaper hiring editors (n=14) and journalism academic administrators (n=16), limited my results to the two data sets. Qualitative research allows for this data to be representative of a snapshot in time of the state of legacy newspaper hiring wants and journalism school teachings. Recognizing that the data set is small relative to the number of newspapers and journalism schools in the United States, the researcher endeavored to provide thick

description. Thick descriptions are deep, dense, and detailed accounts that produce the feeling for readers that they have experienced the events being described (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Therefore, considering the broad audience for this research consists of journalism practitioners and journalism educations, through thick description, credibility has been established through a narrative account of the situation facing newsroom management and academic administrators.

Regarding the legacy newspapers that appeared in this research, 78 percent of those represent major newspaper chains in the United States. A limitation could be that these 11 newspapers from chains represent standard HR hiring practices across the chain, and therefore might represent what the chain is looking for in recent journalism school graduates and not necessarily what that individual newspaper is looking for. None of the legacy newspaper hiring editors interviewed for this research espoused this concern, however it should be noted.

Additionally, a byproduct of this research, the result of a semi-structured interviewing method, produced results pointing to the strained relationship between legacy newspaper hiring editors and academic administrators. This point on its face could stand to be studied further and could produce both quantitative and qualitative research examining the relationship between the two actors. However, for the intent of this research, because there is no discernable dialogue between any of the hiring editors and academic administrators, it is difficult to determine how an initial conversation would start, even though both sides agree that a dialogue would be beneficial. It is the hope of this research that a conversation ensues as a result of the findings.

Supplementary research in this area should broaden the number of respondents to provide more generalizable data. Moreover, management on the industry side and administration on the academy side were the participants in this study. To gain a broader picture of the feelings and tendencies of other newsroom and academic personnel as they pertain to recent journalism school graduates, a more expansive field of practitioners and educators should be interviewed and studied.

The accreditation process of journalism and mass communication programs, and the merits or unimportance of accreditation (depending who you ask) should be studied to determine its relevance in the current journalism world. Additionally, accreditation scholars might want to investigate further into a comment former Northwestern University Medill School of Journalism former Dean Dr. Bradley Hamm said in our interview:

> People trot out these old phrases like, "Oh, if you're not accredited, you don't have a commitment to diversity." Well, if that's what prompts you to have a commitment to diversity, then yours is not a good program. My argument on accreditation is that it's limiting. I'm okay with doing it. I just felt the standards were too low and they're extremely subjective. Accreditation proves nothing. You spend six years studying yourself and the main goal is to write a report saying you're great. I don't see the schools getting any better. Some argue that's not accreditation's goal. Medill has passed and failed throughout the years. We passed the last time and I didn't have an accreditation plan, which should have

> been an automatic failure, but they passed us anyway. The whole thing is all messed up. Medill can fail three or four standards because we don't know what they are frankly, but still pass accreditation. My feeling is there should be something more than that. For instance, schools like Southeast Missouri State should not be held to the same accrediting standard as large research universities. – Former Dean Bradley Hamm, Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism

Finally, a distinct group mentioned throughout this study, but a group that was not studied, is the collective group of recent journalism school graduates. This is an obvious group for future research, as both quantitative and qualitative research can help triangulate whether the strategies and synergies of legacy newspaper hiring editors and academic administrators are effecting this new group of future career newspaper journalists.

Conclusion

This research concludes that both the legacy newspaper industry and the academy are aware of shifting market patterns and the increasing prevalence of digital technology in the world of media. They are also aware that legacy newspapers have a continued place in American media, whether as print or digital products. Moreover, both groups realize that journalism school graduates will be the future workforce of those newspapers. Still, both groups recognize that they are dependent on each other for

success, and they recognize that communication is key and that they do not communicate with each other nearly enough. Just as in healthcare, as Bentancourt (2018) writes, "Patients' perception of us, and of our health care system and the team around us, informs, and is, their reality" (p. 241), the same principle holds true in journalism: The academy's perception of newsroom editors, and of their reporters and new hires around them, informs, and is, their reality. The same is true for journalism academic administrators.

Among the various findings of this research as mentioned throughout the "Discussion" section, three principle outcomes were uncovered. First, the results of the qualitative in-depth interviews among hiring editors shows that writing and reporting skills are still the most important educational qualities they hope a journalism program instills in a recent graduate new hire. They also believe that experience in the form of an internship or externship and clips trump grade point average and extra-curricular activities. On the academic administration side, administrators believe that writing and reporting and ethics are the most important educational qualities they hope to instill in a recent college graduate.

Second, 75 percent of academic administrators believe that having social media or multi-media skills are the most important qualities they can instill in a student, compared to only 14 percent of newspaper hiring editors. That shows there is a disconnect regarding the most important skills to teach students after writing and reporting. Also, although both groups believe that experiential learning is more important than a high grade point average for a recent graduate looking to acquire his

first job in newspaper journalism, most journalism programs do not make internships or externships a requirement for a degree. Rather, they recommend it, just like ACEJMC's Curriculum and Instruction Standards "encourages" internships, but does not require them for accreditation (see Appendix 3). The time has come for all ACEJMC journalism programs to make some form of experiential learning mandatory as a requirement for a school to earn and maintain its accreditation.

Third, all of the results points to overriding (and now empirical) data that suggests that there is a communication disconnect on the part of both legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism academic administrators. Responses from each side makes similar statements that the other side has failed to reach out. It is time for a longitudinal and sustainable dialogue, certainly among the journalism programs that track the best in the eyes of newspaper practitioners, and also for journalism programs and their city's local and regional publications. The teaching hospital model of medicine, once offered by select programs and now a standard training technique for medical students, should be the standard for journalism students. The legacy newspaper industry is making a comeback and news outlets continue to rely on the writing and reporting of newspapers for credible, reliable news. Additionally, newspaper management is innovating and journalism schools are seeing increased enrollment. Taken together, for the newspapers and journalism schools that partner together, there is tremendous potential to become go-to sources of news and information for readers, while allowing students to learn in a working laboratory (see Appendix 11, Table 5 and Appendix 12, Table 6).

This research contributes to the advancement of science because it monitors the rate of change and the speed in which it is occurring for both the industry and the academy. This research also pinpoints actual skills that the newspaper industry is looking for at this particular moment in time. Principally, this research broadcasts the disconnect between legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism academic administrators for the first time, thereby transforming the perception into reality. It also shows that both participants want there to be more dialogue between each other, yet they do not know how to reconcile their differences.

Furthermore, on a long enough timeline, should this research be published and cited, a further examination of whether a figurative bridge was built between legacy newspaper hiring managers and academic administrators and the results of future conversations should be studied to determine whether the two groups have come together to reconcile any differences and to move the needle in a positive direction for newsrooms and classrooms.

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Appendix 1: Recruitment script for hiring editors and academic administrators via email (IRB approved)

IRB NUMBER: 9812

701-A-3

Email used for recruitment to Participate in Research

Good day. Would you be interested in participating in a research project I am conducting at the University of Oklahoma? I would like you to participate because you are a leader in your particular field and have interaction with recent journalism school graduates. I am conducting this research project because I am hoping to learn more about and to identify the intersection of legacy newspaper industry wants and needs and journalism school institutional teachings. About 30 people will participate, 10 maximum from each subgroup of legacy newspaper hiring editors, journalism school academic administrators, and recent journalism school graduates currently working in their first jobs out of college. If you agree to participate, I will be asking you to sit for an interview of 45 minutes to an hour. The questions will concern your role in either hiring recent journalism school graduates for their first job out of college, or helping to shape the curriculum in the institution from where the journalism student just graduated. Your participation in this research doesn't involve any direct risks or benefits to you. The interview can happen in person at any designated, agreed-upon location, or over Skype or FaceTime. Would you be interested in participating in my research? If so, please let me know a good interview time, place, and/or method (in person, Skype, or FaceTime). If you agree, I will email you a consent form for your signature. Please do not hesitate to contact me either at this email address adam.pitluk@OU.edu, or call me at 917-447-7731 if you have any questions. You can also email my chair, Dr. Ralph Beliveau, at Beliveau@OU.edu.Thank you for your consideration. Warm Regards, Adam Pitluk

Appendix 2: Recruitment script for hiring editors and academic administrators via telephone (IRB approved)

IRB NUMBER: 9812

701-A-3

Oral Consent Script to Participate in Research

Good day. Would you be interested in participating in a research project I am conducting at the University of Oklahoma? I would like you to participate because you are a leader in your particular field and have interaction with recent journalism school graduates. I am conducting this research project because I am hoping to learn more about and to identify the intersection of legacy newspaper industry wants and needs and journalism school institutional teachings. About 30 people will participate, 10 maximum from each subgroup of legacy newspaper hiring editors and journalism school academic administrators. If you agree to participate, I will be asking you to sit for an interview of 45 minutes to an hour. The questions will concern your role in either hiring recent journalism school graduates for their first job out of college, or helping to shape the curriculum in the institution from where the journalism student just graduated. Your participation in this research doesn't involve any direct risks or benefits to you. The interview can happen in person at any designated, agreed-upon location, or over Skype or FaceTime. All of the information I'm collecting will be kept secure and confidential, and only I/the researchers or the University of Oklahoma – Norman Campus Institutional Review Board will be able to look at it. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant or any concerns or complaints regarding your participation, you can contact me/the researchers at 917-447-7731, email me at Adam.Pitluk@OU.edu, or email my committee chair, Dr. Ralph Beliveau, at Beliveau@OU.edu or OU's IRB at 405-325-8110 or irb@ou.edu.

In order to preserve your responses, they will be recorded on an audio recording device.

Do you agree for your interview to be to audio recorded? _____ (note response)

Do you agree to being quoted directly? _____ (note response)

Do you agree to have your name reported with quoted material? _____ (note response)

Do you agree that I can use your interview in future studies? _____ (note response)

Do you agree for your interview to be archived for scholarly and public access? _____ (note response)

May I contact you again to recruit you into this research or to gather additional information?_____ (note response)

Before you agree to participate, remember that your participation is completely voluntary, you don't have to answer any question, and you can stop at any time. If you do choose to participate and then change your mind, you won't be penalized in any way. Finally, if you would like a printed copy of the information I've just read to you, you are welcome to have this one.

Appendix 3: ACEJMC Curriculum and Instruction Standards

Curriculum and Instruction

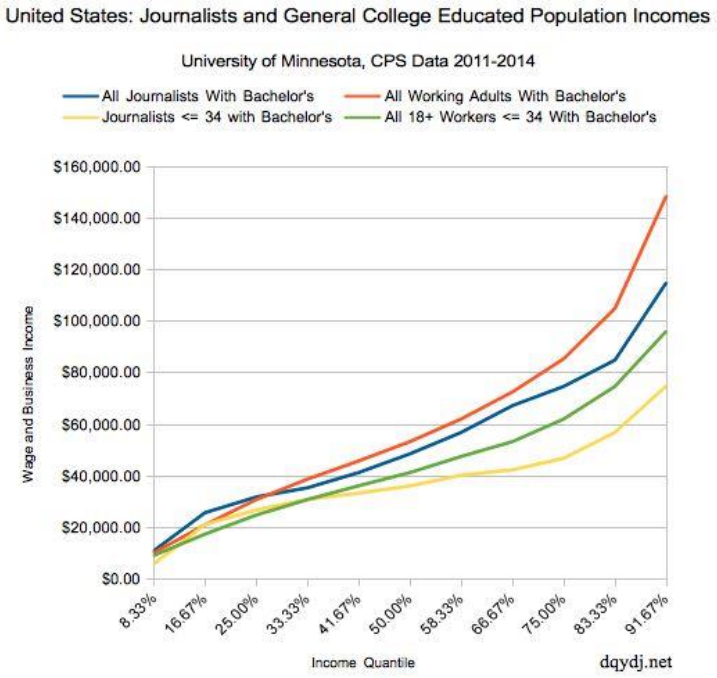
Professional Values and Competencies: The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:
• understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances; • demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications; • demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications; • demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society; • understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information; • demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity; • think critically, creatively and independently; • conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work; • write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve; • critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness; • apply basic numerical and statistical concepts; • apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.
Units requesting evaluation of a professional master's program must also demonstrate how their professional master's graduates attain this additional core competency:
• contribute to knowledge appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

Indicators:
(a) The unit requires that students take a minimum of 72 semester credit hours (or 104 quarter credit hours) required for a baccalaureate degree outside of journalism and mass communications and meet the liberal arts and sciences-general education requirements of the institution. ACEJMC expects at least 95 percent of the graduating classes in the two academic years preceding an accreditation visit to meet these requirements. (b) The unit provides a balance among theoretical and conceptual courses, professional skills courses, and courses that integrate theory and skills to achieve the range of student competencies listed by the Council. (c) Instruction, whether on-site or online, is demanding and current, and is responsive to professional expectations of digital, technological and multimedia competencies. The unit has an ongoing process in place to connect faculty and administrators to the professions they represent, with a specific understanding of the changing skills needed to be successful in the workplace. (d) Student-faculty classroom ratios facilitate effective teaching and learning in all courses; the ratio in skills and laboratory sections, whether on-site or online, should not exceed 20-1. (Campaigns courses are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.) (e) The unit advocates and encourages opportunities for internship and other professional experiences outside the classroom and supervises and evaluates them when it awards academic credit. Schools may award academic credit for internships in fields related to journalism and mass communications, but credit should not exceed six semester credits (or nine quarter credit hours). Students may take up to two semester courses (or their quarter equivalent) at an appropriate professional organization where the unit can show ongoing and extensive dual supervision by the unit's faculty and professionals. Students may take up to three semester courses (or their quarter equivalent) at a professional media outlet owned and operated by the institution where full-time faculty are in charge and where the primary function of the media outlet is to instruct students.
Evidence:
Student records and transcripts Unit bulletins and brochures Syllabi and course materials that demonstrate students are provided with instruction to enable them to acquire digital, technological and multimedia competencies in keeping with professional expectations Records of teaching awards and citations, curricular and course development grants, attendance at teaching workshops, and publications and papers on teaching Class rosters of skills courses

Records and statistics on and evaluations of internships, with and without academic credit
For units requesting evaluation of a professional master's program:
Indicators:
(f) At least half of the required credit hours are in either professional skills or that integrate theory and skills appropriate to professional communication careers.
(g) Instruction and curricular requirements for professional graduate students are more advanced and rigorous than for undergraduate students, including courses open to both undergraduate and graduate students.
Evidence:
Course syllabi and other documents demonstrating the unit has a professional graduate curriculum that prepares master's degree graduates for significant professional careers that provide leadership and influence Graduate student records and transcripts Undergraduate student records and transcripts demonstrating student experience equivalent to liberal arts education

Appendix 4: Journalists and all workers with bachelor's degrees in the United States, 2011-2014

Journalists and All Workers With Bachelor's Degrees in the United States, 2011-2014



Appendix 5

Table 1: Newspapers and their hiring managers contacted for study

NEWSPAPER	LOCATION	CIRCULATION	EDITOR
Alexander City Outlook	Alexander City, Ala.	3,000	Mitch Sneed Mitch.sneed@alexcityoutlook.com
Arizona Daily Star	Tucson, Ariz.	60,000	Jill Jorden Spitz jspitz@tucson.com
Coloradoan (Gannett)	Fort Collins, Colo.	12,700	Eric Larsen (news) ericlarsen@coloradoan.com
Fayetteville Observer	Fayetteville, N.C.	30,000 daily; 32,000 Sunday	Matt Leclercq mleclercq@fayobserver.com
Honolulu Star-Advertiser	Honolulu, Hawaii	151,500 daily; 165,500 Sunday	Frank Bridgewater fbridgewater@staradvertiser.com
Houston Chronicle (Hearst)	Houston, Texas	186,500 daily; 293,000 Sunday	Nancy Barnes (Leaving for NPR) John McKeon, Pres and Pub jmckeon@chron.com
Las Vegas Review-Journal	Las Vegas, Nev.	231,500 daily; 165,000 Sunday	Glenn Cook gcook@reviewjournal.com
Newsday	Melville, N.Y.	278,000 daily; 312,000 Sunday	Debbie Henley Debbie.henley@newsday.com
Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram (Maine Today Media)	Portland, Maine	32,300 daily; 46,600 Sunday	Cliff Schechtman cschechtman@pressherald.com
Register-Guard	Eugene, Ore.	43,500 daily; 47,300 Sunday	Jackman Wilson (editorial) chelsea.deffenbacher@registerguard.com referred me to Alison Bath abath@registerguard.com
Dallas Morning News (Belo)	Dallas, Texas	288,000 Sunday; 215,000 daily	Tom Huang, Managing Editor thuang@dallasnews.com
Albany Times Union (Hearst)	Albany, NY	95,000 Sunday; 86,000 daily	Rex Smith rsmith@timesunion.com
Albuquerque Journal	Albuquerque, N.M.	98,000 Sunday; 81,000 daily	Karen Moses, EIC kmoses@abqjournal.com

Ledger-Enquirer	Columbus, Georgia	24,000 Sunday; 20,000 daily	Kara Edgerson, Senior Editor kedgerson@ledger-enquirer.com
Oklahoman	Oklahoma City, OK	147,000 Sunday; 105,000 daily	Ashley Howard, NIE Educational Services editor ahoward@oklahoman.com
Petoskey News-Review (GateHouse)	Petoskey, Michigan	9,000 daily	Jeremy McBain, Executive Editor jmcbain@petoskeynews.com
Quad-City Times	Davenport, Iowa	45,000 Sunday; 40,000 daily	Matt Christensen, Executive Editor mchristensen@qctimes.com
Rockford Register Star (GateHouse)	Rockford, Ill.	40,000 Sunday; 30,000 daily	Mark Baldwin, Executive Editor mbaldwin@rrstar.com
San Antonio Express-News	San Antonio, Texas	150,000 Sunday; 82,000 daily	Marc Duvoisin, Editor Marc.Duvoisin@express-news.net
Times of Northwest Indiana	Munster, Indiana	52,000 Sunday; 41,000 daily	Daniel Riordan, Editor Daniel.riordan@nwi.com
Baltimore Sun	Baltimore, Md.	253,000 Sunday; 133,000 daily	Sam Davis, managing editor, sam.davis@baltsun.com
C-Ville Weekly	Charlottesville Va.	23,000 weekly	Laura Longhine, editor, editor@c-ville.com
Denver Post	Denver, Colorado	500,000 Sunday; 200,000 daily	Matt Sebastian, senior editor, msebastian@denverpost.com
Hutchinson News	Hutchinson, Kansas	28,000 Sunday; 26,000 daily	Ron Sylvester, editor, rsylvester@hutchnews.com
Inlander	Spokane, Washington	50,000 Weekly	Jacob Fries, editor, editor@inlander.com
News-Gazette	Champaign, Illinois	32,000 Sunday; 29,000 daily	Jim Rossow, editor-in-chief, jrossow@news-gazette.com
Orlando Sentinel	Orlando, Fla	191,000 Sunday, 91,000 daily	Julie Anderson, editor, janderson@sun-sentinel.com
Record-Journal	Meriden, Conn	42,500 daily	Eric Cotton, managing editor, ecotton@record-journal.com
Lansing State Journal (Gannett)	Lansing, Michigan	41,000 daily, 66,000 Sunday	Matt Miller, features editor, mrmiller@lsj.com

Dallas Observer (Village Voice Media)	Dallas, Texas	44,000 weekly	Joe Pappalardo, editor, pappalardojoe@gmail.com
South Florida Sun-Sentinel (Tribune)	Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.	164,000 daily, 229,000 Sunday	Dan Sweeney, features editor, dsweeney@sunsentinel.com
Arizona Republic	Phoenix, AZ	400,000 Sunday; 300,000 daily	Greg Burton, Executive editor, greg.burton@azcentral.com
Austin American-Statesman	Austin, TX	130,500 Sunday; 101,000 daily	John Bridges, managing editor, jbridges@statesman.com
Herald-Tribune	Sarasota, FLA	76,000 Sunday; 68,000 daily	Terry Galvin, business editor, terry.galvin@heraldtribune.com
San Francisco Chronicle (Hearst)	San Francisco, Calif.	327,000 Sunday; 202,000 daily	Audrey Cooper, editor-in-chief, acooper@sfchronicle.com
Record Searchlight (Gannett)	Redding, Calif.	19,000 Sunday, 17,000 daily	Silas Lyons, editor, silas.lyons@redding.com
Toledo Blade	Toledo, Ohio	124,000 Sunday; 99,500 daily	Dave Murray, managing editor, dmurray@theblade.com
The Day	New London, Conn.	80,000 daily	Tim Cotter, managing editor, t.cotter@theday.com
Canton Repository	Canton, Ohio	57,000 daily	Rich Desrosiers, executive editor, rich.desrosiers@cantonrep.com
Cincinnati Enquirer	Cincinnati, Ohio	208,000 Sunday, 110,000 daily	Beryl Love, Executive Editor, blove@enquirer.com
Daytona Beach News-Journal	Daytona Beach, Fla.	83,000 Sunday, 61,000 daily	Pat Rice, columnist+, pat.rice@news-jrnl.com
Erie Times-News	Erie, PA	48,000 daily	Pat Howard, Editor of Engagement, pat.howard@timesnews.com
Herald & Review	Decatur, Ill.	34,000 daily	Tim Woods, managing editor, tim.woods@myheraldreview.com
Press	Atlantic City, NJ	95,000 daily	Buzz Keough, managing editor, wkeough@pressofac.com
Sequoyah County Times	Sallisaw, Oklahoma	No data available	Roy Fseqaulkenberry, editor, Roy@seqcotimes.com

State Journal-Register	Springfield, Ill	24,000 daily	Angie Muhs, executive editor, angie.muhs@sj-r.com
Daily Press (Tribune)	Norfolk, Va.	85,000 Sunday, 55,000 daily	Andi Petrini, executive editor, marisa.porto@pilotonline.com
Akron Beacon Journal	Akron, Ohio	60,000 daily	Darrin Werbeck managing editor, dwerbeck@thebeaconjournal.com
Gainesville Sun	Gainesville, Fla.	26,000 daily	Joel Axon, digital managing editor, axon.joel@gmail.com
Galveston County Daily News	Galveston, TX	33,000 daily	Laura Elder, managing editor, laura.elder@galvnews.com
Napa Valley Register (Lee)	Helena, Calif.	12,000 daily	Sean Scully, director of news content, sscully@sthelenastar.com
Today's News-Herald	Lake Havasu City, Ariz.	No data available	Brandon Bowers, editor, bbowers@havasunews.com
Star News	Wilmington, N.C.	41,300 daily	Sherry Jones, managing editor, sherry.jones@starnewsonline.com
Wisconsin State Journal	Madison, Wisconsin	58,000 daily	John Smalley, editor, jsmalley@madison.com
Amador Ledger Dispatch	Jackson, Calif.	No data available	Caitlyn Schaap, editor, cschaap@ledger.news
Batavia Daily News	Batavia, N.Y.	12,000 daily	John Anderson, Managing Editor, janderson@batavianews.com
Post and Courier	Charleston, S.C.	84,000 daily	Rick Nelson, Editor, rnelson@postandcourier.com

Key: All editors contacted to participate in the study, position, circulation of paper (if they're still in black ink, they did respond to two email queries)
Respondents that participated in the study
Responded and declined to participate

Appendix 6

Table 2: 2019 Best Journalism Colleges in the U.S. (collegefactual.com, 2018)

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY	LOCATION	AVERAGE NEW-HIRE STARTING SALARY	CURRENT DEAN/DIRECTOR/CHAIR
#1 Emerson College	Boston, Mass.	$42,000	Raul Reis raul_reis@emerson.edu
#2 University of Texas-Austin	Austin, Texas	$41,000	Jay Bernhardt (Moody College of Communication) Moody.dean@austin.utexas.edu
#3 University of Missouri-Columbia	Columbia, Mo.	$36,000	David Kurpius kurpiusd@missouri.edu
#4 Northwestern University *not accredited	Chicago, Ill.	$38,000	Bradley Hamm Bradley.hamm@northwestern.edu
#5 New York University	New York, N.Y.	$44,000	Ted Conover (director) Ted.conover@nyu.edu
#6 Boston University	Boston, Mass.	$40,000	Thomas Fiedler comdean@bu.edu
#7 University of Maryland-College Park	College Park, Md.	$40,000	Lucy Dalglish dalglish@umd.edu
#8 George Washington University *not accredited	Washington, D.C.	$42,000	Frank Sesno (director, School of Media & Public Affairs) sesno@gwu.edu
#9 University of Southern California	Los Angeles, Calif.	$41,000	Willow Bay ascjdean@usc.edu
#10 Northeastern University	Boston, Mass.	$44,000	Elizabeth Hudson (College of Media, Art & Design) g.hudson.northeastern.edu
#11 Syracuse University	Syracuse, NY	$45,000	Lorraine Branham lbranham@syr.edu
#12 University of Wisconsin – Madison	Madison, Wisconsin	$42,000	Michael Wagner, PhD Associate Professor mwagner8@wisc.edu

#13 American University	Washington, DC	$43,000	Jeffrey Rutenbeck, Dean jeff@american.edu sent me to Amy Eisman, director aeisman@american.edu
#14 University of Colorado-Boulder	Boulder, Colorado	$42,000	Lori Bergen, Dean Lori.Bergen@colorado.edu sent me to Dr, Elizabeth Skewes, director, Elizabeth.skewes@colorado.edu
#15 Washington and Lee University	Lexington, Va.	$45,000	Toni Locy, Department Head locyt@wlu.edu
#16 Hofstra University	Hempstead, NY	$43,000	Dr. Cliff Jernigan, department chair communications, Cliff.Jernigan@Hofstra.edu
#17 University of Kansas	Lawrence, Kansas	$40,000	Ann Brill, Dean abrill@ku.edu
#18 Indiana University	Bloomington Indiana	$39,000	Dr. Emily Metzgar, director of undergraduate studies, emetzgar@indiana.edu
#19 Cal Poly San Luis *not accredited	San Luis Obispo, Calif	$50,000	Dr. Mary Glick, Department Chair, mmglick@calpoly.edu
#20 Quinnipiac University	Hamden, Connecticut	$46,000	Prof. Margarita Diaz, chairperson, journalism, Margarita.Diaz@quinnipiac.edu
#21 University of Oklahoma (did not contact)	Norman, OK	$40,000	Dean Ed Kelley
#22 University of Iowa	Iowa City, Iowa	$40,000	Dr. David Ryfe, director, david-ryfe@uiowa.edu
#23 Lehigh University	Bethlehem, Pa.	$52,000	Dr. Jeremy Littau, associate professor, Jeremy.littau@lehigh.edu
#24 University of Minnesota	Minneapolis, Minnesota	$42,000	Dr. Elisia Cohen, Hubbard School of JMC chair, ecohen@umn.edu
#25 Creighton University	Omaha, Nebraska	$41,000	Dr. Bridget Keegan, Dean, bridgetKeegan@creighton.edu

#26 DePaul University	Chicago, Ill	$41,000	Dr. Bruce Evensen, director, bevensen@depaul.edu
#27 University of Massachusetts *not accredited	Amherst, Mass	$43,000	Prof. Brian McDermott, chair, mcdermott@journ.umass.edu
#28 Howard University	Washington, DC	$42,000	Yanick Rice Lamb, chair, ylamb@howard.edu
#29 University of Oregon	Eugene, Oregon	$38,000	Dr. Regina Lawrence, director of communication, rgl@uoregon.edu
#30 Texas Christian University	Fort Worth, Texas	$43,000	Uche Onyebadi,chair u.onyebadi@tcu.edu
#31 West Virginia University	Morgantown , WVA	$39,000	Maryanne Reed, Dean, Maryanne.reed@wvu.edu
#32 University of Georgia	Athens, GA	$38,000	Dr. Charles Davis, dean, cndavis@uga.edu
#33 Rutgers University	New Brunswick, NJ	$44,000	Dean Rob Eccles, professor rob.eccles@rutgers.edu
#34 Pepperdine University	Malibu, California	$40,000	Sarah Stone Watt, dean, sarah.stonewatt@pepperdine.edu
#35 Samford University	Birmingham, Alabama	$38,000	Dr. Bernie Ankney, chair, rnankney@samford.edu
#36 University of Illinois	Urbana, Illinois	$46,000	Brant Houston, chair, houstonb@illinois.edu
#37 Temple University	Philadelphia, Pa	$38,000	Dr. David Mindich, chair, mindich@temple.edu
#38 Southern Methodist University	Dallas, TX	$45,000	Tony Penderson, chair, tpederso@smu.edu
#39 Chapman University	Orange, California	$38,000	Susan Paterno, professor, paterno@chapman.edu
#40 Ithaca College	Ithaca, NY	$41,000	Dr. James Rada, chair, jrada@ithaca.edu
#41 University of Miami	Coral Gables, Fla.	$41,000	Diane Millette, chair, millette@miami.edu
#42 Penn State	University Park, Pa	$44,000	Dr. Russ Eshleman, chair, ree4@psu.edu
#43 Baylor University	Waco, Texas	$42,000	Dr. Sara Stone, chair, sara_stone@baylor.edu

#44 Biola University	La Mirada, California	$40,000	Dr. Tamara Welter, chair, tamara.welter@biola.edu
#45 Michigan State University	East Lansing, Michigan	$40,000	Dr. Lucinda Davenport, chair, ludavenp@msu.edu
#46 University of Connecticut	Storrs, Connecticut	$44,000	Dr. Maureen Croteau, head, Maureen.croteau@uconn.edu
#47 Saint Bonaventure University	Saint Bonaventure, NY	$36,000	Dr. Chris Mackowski, chair, cmackows@sbu.edu
#48 Marquette University	Milwaukee, Wisconsin	$44,000	Dean Sarah Feldner, sarah.feldner@marquette.edu
#49 University of California – Irvine	Irvine, California	$41,000	Prof. Barry Siegel, dirfector, bsiegel@uci.edu
#50 Gonzaga University	Spokane, Washington	$43,000	Dr. Susan English, chair, english@gonzaga.edu
#51 Hampton University	Hampton, Virginia	$45,000	Dean DaVida Plummer, davida.plummer@hamptonu.edu
#52 University of Florida	Gainesville, Fla.	$42,000	Ted Spiker, department chair, tspiker@jou.ufl.edu
#53 University of South Carolina	Columbia, SC	$37,000	Dr. Erik Collins, director, erik.collins@sc.edu
#54 Brigham Young University	Provo, Utah	Not reported	Dean Ed Adams, ed_adams@byu.edu
#55 Stony Brook University	Stony Brook, NY	$43,000	Dean Howard Schneider, howard.schneider@stonybrook.edu
#56 Seattle University	Seattle, Washington	$45,000	Dr. Christopher Paul, paulc@seattleu.edu
#57 Drake University	Des Moines, Iowa	$39,000	Dean Kathleen Richardson, kathleen.richardson@drake.edu
#58 Colorado State University	Fort Collins, Colorado	Not reported	Dr. Greg Luft, chair, greg.luft@colostate.edu
#59 University of Denver	Denver, Colorado	$41,000	Dr. Lynn Schofield Clark, chair, lynn.clark@du.edu
#60 Miami University *not accredited	Oxford, Ohio	$42,000	Dr. Richard Campbell, chair, campber@miamioh.edu

#61 Duquesne University	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	$40,000	Dr. James Vota, chair, vota@duq.edu
#62 University of Nevada-Reno	Reno, Nevada	$41,000	Dr. Donica Mensing, chair, dmensing@unr.edu
#63 Ohio University	Athens, Ohio	$40,000	Dean Scott Titsworth, dean titswort@ohio.edu
#64 University of Richmond	Richmond, Virginia	$42,000	Prof. Robert Hodierne, chair, rhodiern@richmond.edu
#65 University of Mississippi	Oxford, Mississippi	$38,000	Assistant Dean Dr. Debora Wenger, drwenger@olemiss.edu
#66 Elon University	Elon, North Carolina	$41,000	Dean Rochelle Ford, rford9@elon.edu
#67 University of Nebraska	Lincoln, Nebraska	$39,000	Dean Amy Struthers, astruthers2@unl.edu
#68 University of Kentucky	Lexington, KY	$38,000	Dr. Mike Farrell, chair, farrell@uky.edu
#69 University of Arizona	Tucson, AZ	$41,000	Prof. Carol Schwalbe, chair, cschwalbe@email.arizona.edu
#70 San Diego State University	San Diego, Calif.	$40,000	Dr. Noah Arceneaux, chair, noah.arceneaux@sdsu.edu

Key: All administrators contacted to participate in the study, location, cost (if they're still in black ink, they did not respond to two email queries)
Respondents that participated in the study
Responded that initially agreed to participate and then did not return follow-up calls and/or emails

Appendix 7

Table 3: List of journalism schools that hiring editors said produce the best new-hires (and the number of times a school was mentioned)

Journalism school named as a go-to program for hiring editors	# of times mentioned
Central Michigan University	1
Ohio University	4
University of Wisconsin, Madison	2
University of Illinois	1
University of Michigan	2
Ball State University	1
Southern Illinois University	1
Loyola University, Chicago	1
Northwestern University	5
University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire	1
University of Texas, Austin	3
University of Missouri	5
University of Texas, Dallas	1
Colorado State University	1
Oregon State University	2
University of California, Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism	2
Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism	5
Arizona State University	2
UCLA	1
University of Southern California	2
University of Maryland	1
Virginia Commonwealth University	1
Elon University	2
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	1
Indiana University	1
University of Nebraska	1
Chico State University	1
California Polytechnic University	1
Fresno State University	1
University of Oregon	1

(n=13, hiring editors were allowed to name more than one journalism school; one editor abstained from mentioning any schools and said none of them prepare students for the professional newsrooms but that clips and internships were the real preparers)

Appendix 8

Table 4: Breakdown of results of skills hiring editors and administrators find valuable

What legacy newspaper hiring editors consider important skills/qualities	**What journalism academic administrators consider important skills/qualities**
Writing and reporting (100%)	News skills/writing/reporting (100%)
Internships/externships/experiential learning (100%)	Internships/externships/experiential learning (94%)
Adaptability, curiosity, hit-the-ground-running motivation, self-starter, go-getter (86%)	Curiosity/analysis/synthesis/critical thinking (81%)
Grade Point Average (50%)	Grade Point Average (53%)
Extracurricular activities (50%)	Extracurricular activities (47%)
Business reporting, photography, investigative reporting (3 editors per skill) (21%)	No administrator referred to this skill set as most important
Technology/social media/ multi-media skills (14%)	Technology/social media/coding/multimedia (75%)

Appendix 9

List of sample questions asked of legacy newspaper hiring editors in the semi-structured interviews. **Bold** questions were asked of everyone.

What are the most important qualities a legacy newspaper hiring editor requires from a recent college graduate new hire?
Against and within what master narratives do hiring editors anticipate the industry's needs from recent graduates at this very moment?
How important is it for a student to have a lot of depth in research and reporting versus production skills upon graduation?
Rank them in order of your preference for a recent graduate new hire: grades, experiential learning, extracurricular activities.
How much weight is placed on extracurricular activities, grades, and internships?
How have the different required skills changed over time?
Can you tell a difference in the aptitude of students graduating now than at any time in the past?
Are social media skills a key component of the job of a new hire?
What skills are you looking for in recent journalism school graduates that you feel will be applicable in the future?
What does the future look like for your newsroom?
Do you have any go-to journalism schools or programs that you recruit from?
How often do you reach out to academic administrators at the various journalism schools you recruit from and voice your needs as a newspaper hiring editor/section editor/editor-in-chief?
How often do academic administrators call you and ask you if there were any needs or demands in your industry that should be addressed in journalism programs?
Is there a disconnect between the industry and the academy?
When did the disconnect start?
How will the disconnect end?
Is the accreditation or non-accreditation of a journalism program important when you are considering hiring a graduate of that program?
In 2018 (2019 for the interviews conducted in 2019) please name the journalism programs you think are doing the best job.

**These questions were not the only questions asked of legacy newspaper hiring editors. The semi-structured format meant that each interview varied and that follow-up questions were predicated on the answers to questions. However, these questions were asked of most of the hiring editors.*

Appendix 10

List of sample questions asked of journalism academic administrators in the semi-structured interviews. **Bold** questions were asked of everyone.

What are the most important tenets and skills that journalism school administrators believe students need to learn by the time they graduate journalism school?
By what parallel skills and qualities (grades, participation, outside experience [internships/externships]) do administrators define a successful academic career?
What distinguishes academic administrators' graduating students from those of other programs to make their graduating student attractive to a newspaper hiring editor?
What distinguishes academic administrators' graduating students from those of other programs to make their graduating student attractive to a newspaper hiring editor?
What do these parallel skills and qualities say about the collective value that journalism school administrators place on a journalism degree above any other degree that makes a journalism school graduate hirable?
How have the approaches to teaching journalism changed over time?
How has the curriculum changed since the Internet?
Can you tell a difference in the aptitude of students graduating now than at any time in the past?
Are social media skills a key component of soon-to-be-working student journalists?
What skills are you imparting in recent journalism school graduates that you feel will be applicable in the future?
What does the future look like for your department?
What qualities about your journalism program distinguishes your journalism program from your peers?
How often do you reach out to newspaper editors at various newspapers that either recruit from your school or that you believe are on the uptick and voice your opinions about the direction of the industry?
How often do newspaper editors call you and ask you if you could include any specific classes in journalism program?
Is there a disconnect between the industry and the academy? [If they answered yes] …
When did the disconnect start?
How will the disconnect end?
Is ACEJMC accreditation necessary?

**These questions were not the only questions asked of legacy newspaper hiring editors. The semi-structured format meant that each interview varied and that follow-up questions were predicated on the answers to questions. However, these questions were asked of most of the hiring editors.*

Appendix 11

Table 5: At a glance – summary of results, legacy newspaper hiring editor interviews

Major Theme	**Minor Theme**	**Applicable Quote**
100% of legacy newspaper hiring editors interviewed said that writing & reporting skills are most important quality of journalism school graduates, and that those qualities have waned over the last decade	Other editors expressed a desire that students have a variety of secondary skills, like video, photography, coding, and social media skills. All of the editors, however, said those were second to writing and reporting	**"**I'm finding that a lot of the schools are skipping over the basics and teaching them all about social media and how to market themselves. They're forgetting to teach them how to write a story and investigate a story." – *Jeremy McBain, Petoskey News-Review*
100% of legacy newspaper hiring editors interviewed said internships/externships and clips were most important quality of journalism school graduates	50% said clips and come from the student newspaper, and 50% said experience of journalism school graduates can be from the student newspaper	"Internships are number one and everything else is a distant second. One thing I tell students a lot is to get involved in their college papers." – Audrey Cooper, *San Francisco Chronicle*
85% of legacy newspaper hiring editors interviewed said curiosity//adaptability/motivation was among the most important qualities of a recent journalism school graduate	Another recurring theme among hiring editors is that the students coming out are well read and up-to-date on current events. Less than 30% said knowing a second language is mandatory	**"**Curiosity is the only quality that will keep a career journalist in the game. A desire to ask questions; a spark of curiosity that has to be at the core of a younger journalist." –Thomas Huang, *Dallas Morning News*
More than 50% of legacy newspaper hiring editors interviewed said they do not have time to train recent journalism school graduate new-hires, and that they need to be ready to hit the ground running	Other desired competencies are learning on the fly, adapting to a newspaper's individual style guidelines, and assuming any	"They may have great potential, but we don't have the manpower anymore to take a chance. We have to make the right hire

	professional posture or presence of the newspaper	early on." – Mark Baldwin, *Register Star*
All of the hiring editors said writing and reporting skills are more important than production skills, although knowing production skills, they said, makes you more marketable	50% of hiring editors said that students need to have production skills and other interdisciplinary skills to round out their aptitude	**"**Communication is a big one, and I consider that a production skill because they need to be able to communicate the topic regardless of the platform." – Andi Petrini, *Daily Press*

Appendix 12

Table 6: At a glance – summary of results, academic administrator interviews

Major Theme	Minor Theme	Applicable Quote
100% of journalism academic administrators interviewed said that writing & reporting skills are most important quality of journalism school education, and 100% said ethics were tied for most important	No legacy newspaper hiring editors mentioned ethics as a top priority, most likely because that's a baked-in expectation of journalism school graduates	"Starting on the first day of their first year of college, we are teaching them blue-collar journalism skills. That means we're teaching them how to listen well, write well, and tell a good story." – Dean Scott Titsworth, Ohio University
94% of journalism academic administrators interviewed said that internships/externships and clips were most important quality of a journalism student	A decade earlier in a quantitative study, journalism academic administrators said that GPA was the most important quality of a journalism student	"Newspaper hiring editors are coming here looking for students with as much experience as possible. Most of our students have two internships by the time they graduate." Dean Ann Brill, University of Kansas
More than 50% of academic administrators pointed to a teaching hospital model of journalism education, although only one administrator called the teaching hospital model out by name	Three journalism academic administrators said they have knocked down the silos of their journalism programs so that students can become well-versed in multiple journalism and communication disciplines	"The most important skill a student can learn in journalism school is the ability to adapt well enough to be able to say "yes" to whatever they are asked to do. That means print, broadcast, and digital." Dean Charles N. Davis, University of Georgia
Other majority terms academic administrators used to describe the value of what is taught in journalism school are opportunity, experience,	Only two journalism administrators pointed to data journalism and coding as important qualities learned in J-school. However, all	"Here's my little elevator pitch for students interested in journalism: The job that they will get when they graduate probably doesn't exist

learning laboratory, empowering – journalism students need to be able to adapt because they won't know what the industry is like when they graduate	journalism school academic administrators said that students need to have a better, more well-rounded education that the education of journalism school students pre-Internet	now. Parents want my reassurance that I'm giving their child the skills necessary to be successful in life and in journalism." – Dean Kathleen Richardson, Drake University
94% of journalism academic administrators said there is a disconnect between them and the legacy newspaper hiring editors. 100% of them said they believe the newspaper industry is in trouble or "dying"	50% of journalism academic administrators said the only conversations they have with the academy are with various professors as reference checks. No communication occurs regarding curricula or direction	"If there's a disconnect between the industry and the academy, it's been around forever. Look at a typical job posting for a journalism student: I'm not sure Jesus could meet all those requirements." Dr. Debora Wenger, University of Mississippi

Appendix 13

Table 7: Sample interview transcript

Sample Transcript, Dean Lucy Dalglish, University of Maryland

AP: What are the most important tenets and skills that journalism school administrators believe students need to learn by the time they graduate journalism school?

LD: Listening, critical thinking, tenacity, skepticism, the latest in basic digital tools including visual and data management. And solid media law and ethics skills. And how can I forget, writing. It starts with writing.

AP: How has the curriculum changed since the Internet?

LD: They're coming to us with more digital background already, with a bigger toolbox, but there's no question that we're approaching a steady state with digital. But the fact remains that they're going to have incredible search skills, and incredible digital storytelling skills, they're going to need to know how to manipulate data. But we are finally in a place where we're not playing catchup.

AP: To that end, how have approaches to teaching journalism changed over time?

LD: Now we can really double down on what the public really really, really, needs, which is more investigative reporting. In my view, we dropped some critical thinking skills in order to add digital. I heard about it from employers. We require 50 credits. We already had a heavier curriculum than other journalism schools. That's because we're trying to give our students more opportunities.

AP: Is it harder to recruit students to Merrill who want to learn digital journalism or something with social media communications because of Merrill's reputation as a tried-and-true journalism school?

LD: Not really. It might be harder for some schools to recruit students they used to automatically get because of all the nuances we have here. Political Science, for instance, used to get students who had a better understanding of how government works. Here, students can go to a city council meeting and they'll see what does and doesn't go on there, and they can report on it for professional media outlets, not just the student newspaper. They come in and they can do any digital thing they want to. We encourage their digital growth. We've gotten to a place in time through where most of the students already have the digital skills and they can walk into a courthouse and cover a federal court hearing just like that.

AP: Is real world reporting experience important while a student is still enrolled?

LD: Now more than ever. Newsrooms no longer have the luxury of providing training for young journalists. It's more like a ready-made pizza. I don't want to exaggerate anything, but newspaper editors thought in some ways that we have over-compensated for the needs of the industry. They're coming to us now and asking if students take coding courses in the first year.

AP: Who's coming to you?

LD: Recruiters for media outlets.

AP: Newspapers specifically?

LD: They all recruit out of here.

AP: How often?

LD: A: I have a fulltime recruiting coordinator. We get calls every day. We get requests for students all time. In particular, if it's on an entertainment topic, students will jump at that. We're posting jobs all the time. As you might expect, I have almost unlimited opportunities to feed big newsrooms with domestic minority students. I might have three outstanding African American students but 15 jobs.

AP: Are recruiting minority students a problem at Merrill?

LD: It's perhaps more difficult for us. We're in the Fourth US District Court of Appeals, covering Virginia and Maryland. We cannot recruit based on race. That's why I can't go out and throw money at them.

AP: Is ACEJMC accreditation necessary?

LD: Having 50 hours does not butt up with accredited program. If you need 120-122 hours for graduation, only 42 could be in journalism. They changed their standard to allow for 50. We are requiring 45 hours instead of 42, which most programs require. If you're a really interested student and you want to pick up an extra course, there is flexibility. I don't think many schools are going to the full 50 the way we have. We've taken advantage of it the new standard. That helps for study abroad as well. I have a significant number of students that want to study abroad.

AP: Is accreditation important, then, to Merrill?

LD: It's important because we've been accredited for a long time, and it would raise a lot of eyebrows if we lost our accreditation.

AP: By what parallel skills and qualities (like grades, campus participation, outside internships or externships) do you use to define a successful academic career for a student?

LD: Certainly, academic performance is really important at Merrill. We also place a lot of emphasis on internships and our capstone experiences. We've been doing the medical school model of journalism for 29 years.

You know, the teaching hospital model. Maybe your internships were not that great when you were in journalism school. While you are here, you will not graduate without a heavy duty experience in the field where you are doing real journalism.

AP: Is it required of your curriculum?

LD: Yes. Whether it's investigative reporting picked up by the *Sun* or broadcast picked up by *NewsHour*, you will have experience by the time you graduate from here. And grades. You can have these great experiences and mediocre grades but you shouldn't have stellar grades and not have exceptional experiences. This is Maryland. It is not an easy school to get into or out of. For our students, that is a form of motivation. Our students are attracted to our program because we are hands-on and they receive real world experience in our model. I'm not saying it's the only way to run a journalism school, but we're on this campus and we have to fit in with the rest of university, which is highly competitive.

AP: What distinguishes your graduating students from those of other programs? Or, another way I can ask it, what makes your graduating student attractive to a newspaper hiring editor?

LD: They are going to have real life experiences while they are here and if they work hard they're going to find their student work published in the *Washington Post* and on the *NewsHour* and winning SPJ awards. They're

going to have that in-college experience. Plus, they're going to have access to internships that are just unbelievable. We're within a metro ride from some of the best newsrooms in the world. We require two internships to graduate, but most of our students leave with four. We do a good job of that, of making sure that all graduating students have real-world experiences. The other thing is this school is small. We only have 550 or so undergraduates. We're a boutique school. We're at a big university, but we are a small journalism school. You are not going to find anybody else out there that give their journalism students as much attention. Maybe Montana is set up differently but we are only journalism. As a result, as the dean, I don't have people jockeying for position.

AP: Like what? Like strat comm isn't jockeying for j-school dollars?

LD: Leave the strat comm people in strat comm. Those people stay over there. I want the journalists. Because we're small – and this is also a distinguishing characteristic about our program – we get to know every kid really, really well. More than 50 percent of Merrill students are from out of state. None of the others journalism schools come close. That's because their legislatures would have a cow. Thank God, it helps us maintain stature on campus. It makes people say, "look at all those kids from out of state that want to go to school there."

AP: What does the future look like for your department?

LD: The trend in journalism education is to go more to big media schools and combine programs and come up with administrative efficiencies. That's more of the direction people are tending to go in. Here's the other thing that's different about us: We've changed up our curriculum. I don't know how old you are but when you went to journalism school, the various programs were probably in silos. Where did you go to journalism school?

AP: Missouri.

LD: So at Missouri, like a lot of other schools, they silo their programs and silo different departments. Here, we have a unified curriculum. You don't have to choose broadcast or multiplatform. We've made it easier for students to explore. That makes it easier for our capstone projects. They might spend one semester spending time on video and the next semester do data journalism.

AP: Was it tough to completely restructure your program, especially given the success that Merrill had in its traditional siloed form?

LD: Yes, it was tough. But change is always tough. The silos had to come down so we could move with the times. You can still become a traditional broadcaster, but employers are asking when they show up here that the ones they are going to hire can also shoot dynamite video. Some of our students who are also very good with social media are being hired by broadcast stations.

AP: Is Merrill innovating journalism curriculum in this regard? I mean, are other schools following your lead and knocking down silos?

LD: It's being mimicked. Georgia and Arizona State are leading the way. There's more of a possibility at the larger, established programs to shift with the times. Missouri is trying to but David [Kurpius] is having problems.

AP: What is the value that you place on a journalism degree above any other degree that makes your graduates hirable?

LD: Out here in the mid-Atlantic and on the eastern seaboard, I'm from North Dakota and Minnesota, and most people in that part of the world know the value of a journalism education. It's not as common out here. A lot of them out here are kind of snobby. For a long time at the *New York Times* and at the *Washington Post*, they thought journalism school was like a trade school. But in the middle of the country, they had land grant schools putting a value on a journalism education. I think the needle is moving in the opposite direction. I think our journalism graduates will have an easier time getting jobs because we make them right and they turn out right. We make them think and we make them have reporting experiences while they're still in school. They come with basic AP Style and they understand media skills and law where they won't go out and trespass. Out job placement rate is between 92-to-94 percent employed within 6 months.

AP: That's fantastic.

LD: It is, and we're very proud of it. My freshman class this past fall was 51 percent higher and my masters class doubled in size. I put in place a pretty darn good recruiting coordinator. The provost came up with more money for out of state scholarships.

AP: Why are so many kids coming back to journalism school when the media has struggled – especially newspapers – in recent history? The Internet is not just for desktops and laptops like it was 10-to-12 years ago. Everything is connected now. The Internet became the Internet of everything, eh?

LD: There is no denying we have a Trump bump. There's no question that students around the country, when he says, "the media is the enemy of the people," students say, "I'm gonna go get those sons of bitches." Immediately after the newsroom shooting in Annapolis, they moved into my newsroom. We weren't using that newsroom over the summer. They've been there ever since. We've implemented their presence into the curriculum. Last semester, our Annapolis News Service bureau students, who were kept in that office, they're now working as *Capital Gazette* reporters. They were hired right away. Our students are getting really incredible experiences. We have by far the biggest news bureau in the state. There's been this added element of physically working desk to desk with

the *Capital Gazette* staff. They like being around the students, and the students like being around the pros. We did a class last spring with Gannett and *USA Today*. One of my professors was doing an audience engagement class. He was looking at how to measure audience engagement using all the live metrics that newsrooms are using. *USA Today* took evergreen content and pitched it in various ways on social media and measured the response from the platforms.

AP: What did the students do for *USA* Today?

LD: They wrote different headlines and they wrote tweets about stories that would appeal to millennials.

AP: Does *USA Today* hire your students?

LD: Yes. And I'll tell you what: Not only did *USA Today* change how they hire, but they are hiring graduates right away now. That's not how it used to work.

AP: How often do newspaper editors call you and ask you if you could include any specific classes in your journalism program?

LD: The short answer is, I don't. Newspapers do not want to talk to anyone who's studying audiences. They're more interested in a business model. But actually, I think the ones that see what's happening, they'll listen to anybody. I don't know of anybody who's really successfully coming up with research on newsroom productivity. We've raised a lot of grant money

through our work. If I had a little more money, I would like to bring in someone to teach basic entrepreneurship.

AP: Can journalism research help the struggling newspaper industry bounce back from a decade of diminished returns?

LD: Are you asking if a solution to the flawed newspaper business model is going to come from the university?

AP: Yes.

LD: No, I think it'll come from a Neuharth. But innovation, AR and VR, Gannett is over here a lot trying to work on that stuff. Social media, the skills stuff, they're very interested. Kids from computer science are coming here as an elective. We started to get some master's students who get snapped up right away. We're doing some innovative things with computer science students looking at us as an interesting elective. Visualization in particular. I mean, you can make bar charts for the next generation of Air Force fighters that are read by a few people with security clearance, or you can make an interactive map of Baltimore Harbor being flooded live on *USA* Today's website for tens of thousands of viewers. Which would you rather do?

AP: Me?

LD: Yes.

AP: I'd want to virtually flood Baltimore Harbor.

LD: Exactly. There are a lot of jobs out there for computer programmers and

visual artists who are proficient in media skills and critical thinking skills.

AP: Does it work the other way also? Can your students minor in computer science and get those Baltimore Harbor virtual-flooding jobs?

LD: They absolutely can. We're seeing more students take computer electives than we have in the past.

AP: Excellent. Thank you very much for your time. I may have some follow-up questions, but I'll try not to bother you. And I'll be sure to email you the quotes I use in my dissertation for an accuracy check.

LD: Thank you. I would appreciate that.

AP: Absolutely. Thank you again, Dean.

LD: My pleasure. Good luck on your dissertation. I am looking forward to your results.