KSU Student Learning Outcome: Knowledge

**Assessment Methods(s)** Briefly describe the assessment tools, measures, or forms of evidence that will be utilized to demonstrate students' accomplishment of the learning outcomes and who will be assessed.

For each of the objectives below, the Assessment Committee used two direct measures: 1) answers to questions relating to specific learning objectives on the A.Q. Miller School assessment exam, which was administered to students in the MC 110 Mass Communication in Society class (N=215) in order to establish a baseline, and then to seniors (N=40) enrolled in the School’s three capstone classes; and 2) assessment of Senior projects from the capstone classes—MC 580 Media Convergence (N=16), MC 640 Advertising Campaigns (N=17) and MC 645 Public Relations Campaigns (N=20)—by industry professionals using a standardized eleven-item rubric. Additionally, we used one indirect method to evaluate the effectiveness of our learning objectives: a survey of the 2014 senior class (N=55), supplied by the University Assessment office, which queried students about the effectiveness of our program’s 12 learning objectives, based on a seven-point Likert scale, with answers ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” Finally, we gleaned applicable information the 2013 alumni survey (N=37), which queries “one year” A.Q. Miller School graduates (people who graduated in 2012) about their overall experiences in the Miller School and K-State overall (this survey was also administered by the University Assessment Office).

**SLO 1:** 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 grievance.

Applied use of law-related questions on the capstone projects scored a 3.8 on the 5 point scale, meaning that the knowledge of media law and First Amendment issues ranked higher than 3.1, the minimum level of expectation established by the assessment committee (in fact, this was the second highest ranking item on the rubric used to evaluate capstone projects). Therefore, A.Q. Miller School students do an overall good job with Mass Communication law and related freedom of expression issues. This conclusion was re-enforced by comparing scores on the assessment exam, where seniors in the capstone classes were 18.6% better than new students who took the exam as part of the School’s introductory class (this was the second highest level of improvement found on the assessment exam). However, it should be noted that senior scores were actually lower in some cases than JMC pre-majors in some areas relating to First Amendment law (there was a 9.9% difference in some cases), indicating the need to reinforce press freedoms throughout the rest of the curriculum. But it should also be noted that basic First Amendment freedoms had been covered in the MC 110 class before the assessment exam was administered, which could have also skewed results in this area. The indirect measure (the Senior 2014 survey) showed that 69.1% of 2014 seniors either agreed (50.9%) or strongly agreed (18.2%) that the that the curriculum had given them a good mastery of communication law.
SLO 2: Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.

All current media practices are rooted in historical foundations, and many classes in the school provide historical perspective on their specific subject matter. However, evaluating senior-level knowledge of history is more difficult than it would first appear, since not all assessment methods easily lend themselves to measuring student knowledge of historical concepts. The capstone assessment was especially difficult since elements of history were not readily apparent in the reporting project in MC 580 and the strategic campaigns that served as the capstone work in MC 640 and MC 645. In those assessments, history scored a 3.4 (slightly better than the 3.1 department threshold). The senior assessment exam allowed for a more direct assessment of students’ historical knowledge; yet, the seniors’ history scores only improved 1.9% over the scores of pre-majors taking the same exam. In retrospect, the committee believes that history-related exam questions may have been too narrowly focused in nature instead of covering more general principles.

The indirect measure (the Senior 2014 survey) showed that 67.3% of 2014 seniors agreed (45.5%) or strongly agreed (21.8%) that they have a better understanding of media and strategic communication-related historical concepts.

SLO 3: Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.

This area turned out to be the highest of all areas tested in the capstone classes, as the professional evaluators found that students could apply domestic diversity principles in their projects. In fact, student work was given a ranking 4.3 out of 5. This was the highest ranking given, although the assessment exam showed that pre-majors coming into the program already knew much about domestic diversity issues. Seniors in capstone classes improved 9.6% over beginning students. In any case this is one of our strengths.

Seniors responding to the satisfaction survey also consider this a major curricular strength, as 90.9% strongly agreed (36.4%) or agreed (54.5%) that their JMC education had given them an awareness of multiple perspectives concerning diversity in U.S. society.

SLO 4: Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.

Global diversity also ranked very high at 4.2 in the capstone evaluations. However, there was inconsistency in the application of international diversity issues among the senior level projects, which was based on the subjects and/or clients featured in the capstone classes. This indicates that when applicable, A.Q. Miller School students understand international diversity issues. But the lack of uniformity in assessing students’ knowledge of international issues and cultures is problematic, and should be addressed in future assessment procedures. In terms of the assessment exam, seniors scored 15.8% higher than beginning students, making this comparison the fifth best level of improvement between the baseline pre-majors and senior students.
On the senior satisfaction survey, 76.3% either agreed or (43.6%) strongly agreed (32.7%) that their education in the A.Q. Miller School had made them aware of perspectives from around the world.

**SLO 11: Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.**

Statistics and numerical data are applied in each of the School’s three sequences. While news stories and strategic communications campaigns can incorporate data, it is less clear about overall student proficiency in this area, since professional evaluators seemingly confused this with another learning objective on conducting research (SLO 8 “conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work”). Research scores on the capstone evaluation ranked above the 3.1 departmental threshold (students averaged a 3.605). Yet, professionals reviewing the capstone work repeatedly complained about the overall quality of research being done. This seems to indicate that students may be interpreting data well, but the depth of their overall research skills is lacking. Future assessments will need to better separate the math and research question components of the final project evaluation. In terms of the assessment exam, seniors scored 14.2% higher than beginning students, indicating that our program has a positive effect in teaching people to interpret data and statistical concepts.

Based on the indirect measure, 21.8% of our seniors strongly agreed and 54.5% agreed that their JMC education had given them the ability to evaluate numerical and statistical data.

**AY 2014 - 2015**

**KSU Student Learning Outcome: Critical Thinking**

**Assessment Methods(s)** Briefly describe the assessment tools, measures, or forms of evidence that will be utilized to demonstrate students' accomplishment of the learning outcomes and who will be assessed.

For each of the objectives below, the Assessment Committee used two direct measures: 1) answers to questions relating to specific learning objectives on the A.Q. Miller School assessment exam, which was administered to students in the MC 110 Mass Communication in Society class (N=215) in order to establish a baseline, and then to seniors (N=40) enrolled in the School’s three capstone classes; and 2) assessment of Senior projects from the capstone classes—MC 580 Media Convergence (N=16), MC 640 Advertising Campaigns (N=17) and MC 645 Public Relations Campaigns (N=20)—by industry professionals using a standardized 11-item rubric. Additionally, we used one indirect method to evaluate the effectiveness of our learning objectives: a survey of the 2014 senior class (N=55), supplied by the University Assessment office, which queried students about the effectiveness of our program’s 12 learning objectives, based on a seven-point Likert scale, with answers ranging from ”strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” Finally, we gleaned applicable information the 2013 alumni survey (N=37), which queries “one year” A.Q. Miller School graduates (people who graduated in 2012) about their overall experiences in the Miller School and K-State overall (this survey was also administered by the University Assessment Office).
**SLO 6: Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.**

Ethics ranked very high in both assessment measures. The average score given by our capstone project reviewers across the three sequences was 4.043, a score that greatly surpassed the 3.1 benchmark. While there were not any specific comments that addressed ethics as a distinct topic, the high average score indicates the reviewers did consider this an area of competency. The second direct measure – the assessment exam – asked four questions related to ethics. Seniors showed a 23.2% improvement rate over the scores from the introductory survey course, and the final score of 78.7% ranks as the third highest score of our competency areas. Thus, direct assessment seems to indicate that the treatment of ethics is an area of strength in the A.Q. Miller School.

Indirect data indicates that Seniors’ self assessment of their understanding of ethics is good, as 90.9% of respondents showed agreement with the statement “I know how to work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity” (40.0% strongly agree and 50.9% agree).

**SLO 7: Think critically, creatively and independently.**

The assessment of critical and creative thinking skills differed greatly between the evaluation of capstone projects and the scores from the assessment examination. The composite score from our industry professionals was 3.958 on the 5 point scale. Qualitative comments from our project reviewers were positive, and the quantitative scores ranked originality and creativity as the fifth highest category out of the 11 assessed on the capstone projects. The assessment examination paints a very different picture. Scores did increase by nearly 7% from pre-majors to seniors. However, the senior score reached only a 30%. This is the lowest assessment category of the 12, lagging behind the final history assessment scores of 48.2%. The committee will need to re-evaluate questions pertaining to this category on subsequent assessment examinations, and discussion has already noted that critical thinking skills may be difficult to assess on a quantitative examination. In the meantime, each sequence should be made aware of these findings.

Seniors responding to the 2014 exit survey showed 87.3% agreement (47.3% strongly agree and 40.0% agree) that their degree plan had helped them become stronger in critical thinking skills. The committee will need to re-evaluate questions pertaining to this category on subsequent assessment examinations, and discussion has already noted that critical thinking skills may be difficult to assess on a quantitative examination.
SLO 8: Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communication professions for which they work.

This objective concentrates on the ability of practitioners to find, evaluate, and use narrative information and numerical data to support the projects’ structure and plans. Quantitative scores on the capstone projects and assessment exam reveal incongruence with qualitative comments that should be examined further. Our professionals gave a numerical rating of 3.605 out of 5 in the research category. Although this surpasses the school’s acceptable standard of 3.1, this did rank as the second lowest category of those reviewed. The second direct measure – the senior assessment exam – asked five questions related to research. The competency revealed a 9% improvement rate between the introductory survey course students and senior students. However, an examination of the qualitative comments reveals a different story. Several of the comments were positive, including “Aspects of the research were solid. They identified their primary target and focused on three subgroups within that larger group,” and “They (the students) found some interesting key points in their research and plan.” This seems to indicate that the students were able to successfully gather research, but it is the application of those research findings that may require further work. This can best be summarized by the following statements: “Sometimes they didn’t realize how important one of those key points actually was, and then didn’t incorporate it,” and “Research used in the campaigns varied among the three groups. The three campaigns demonstrated that each group understood the general concepts of research, but only one campaign really attempted an adequate and somewhat systematic approach to research.” Finally, “The students are aware of the research concepts, but their research implementation efforts need to be sharpened.”

On the Senior survey, 29.1% strongly agreed that they have improved research skills, while 60% showed basic agreement with this statement. Incidentally, according to the survey, 74.5% of Journalism and Mass Communications Seniors said they had participated in undergraduate research projects (this compared with 63.4% of Arts and Sciences students and 55.3% of K-State students as a whole). Therefore, students recognize research as an important pedagogical goal of our curriculum, and, qualitatively speaking, 38% said their research experience contributed to their academic success and 19.4% said their research experience definitely contributed to their career choice.

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Communication in Society class (N=215) in order to establish a baseline, and then to seniors (N=40) enrolled in the School’s three capstone classes; and 2) assessment of Senior projects from the capstone classes—MC 580 Media Convergence (N=16), MC 640 Advertising Campaigns (N=17) and MC 645 Public Relations Campaigns (N=20)—by industry professionals using a standardized 11-item rubric. Additionally, we used one indirect method to evaluate the effectiveness of our learning objectives: a survey of the 2014 senior class (N=55), supplied by the University Assessment office, which queried students about the effectiveness of our program’s 12 learning objectives, based on a seven-point Likert scale, with answers ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” Finally, we gleaned applicable information the 2013 alumni survey (N=37), which queries “one year” A.Q. Miller School graduates (people who graduated in 2012) about their overall experiences in the Miller School and K-State overall (this survey was also administered by the University Assessment Office).

SLO 5: Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.

Objective 5 of the A.Q. Miller School’s core competencies requires that graduates of the program be able to understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information. In the Miller School, this was measured using two direct tools, both of which showed proficiency in the school’s ability to impart this skill on its graduates.

In the capstone courses for each sequence (advertising, public relations and journalism and digital media) final group projects were evaluated by industry professionals for the ability to apply theory. With 24 scores evaluating 10 projects, professionals averaged a rating of 3.6 (out of 5) in the category of theory application. As the school set an acceptable benchmark of 3.1, this was a strongly positive recognition of the program’s ability to teach this competency.

That figure is reinforced by the second direct measurement — the senior assessment exam. The exam asked nine questions related to theory application to a group of 40 students enrolled in capstone courses. To determine a benchmark, the same exam was given to 215 students in the school’s introductory survey class. The competency saw marked improvement between the two groups, with 12.9 percent more capstone-enrolled students correctly answering the questions.

A total of 74.6% of graduating 2014 Seniors reported being in agreement with the statement “I understand theoretical concepts and can apply them to the presentation of images and information in the communications professions” (16.4% strongly agreed and 58.2% agreed).

SLO 9: Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
A.Q. Miller School graduates must be able to write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve. This competency was measured using two direct tools and one indirect tool, all of which showed proficiency in the school’s ability to impart this skill on its graduates.

In the capstone courses for each sequence (advertising, public relations and journalism and digital media) final group projects were evaluated by industry professionals for the ability to write proficiently. Professionals averaged a rating of 3.7 (out of 5) in the category. As the school set an acceptable benchmark of 3.1, this was a strongly positive recognition of the program’s ability to teach this competency.

That figure is reinforced by the second direct measurement — the senior assessment exam. The exam asked four questions related to writing proficiency to a group of 40 students enrolled in capstone courses. To determine a benchmark, the same exam was given to 215 students in the school’s introductory survey class. The competency saw marked improvement between the two groups, with 13.3% more capstone-enrolled students correctly answering the questions.

Finally, the 2014 Senior survey asked two questions regarding student perceptions of the School’s effectiveness in teaching writing, where 47.3% strongly agreed with the statement “I am a better writer” (38.2% agreed). The second question was “I can use correct grammar in the form and styles appropriate to the communications profession and my chosen sequence area.” In this question, 40% strongly agreed and 49.1% agreed with the statement.

SLO 10: Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.

Graduates of the A.Q. Miller School must be able to critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness. This competency was measured using two tools, one direct and one indirect.

The assessment exam asked one question related to evaluation to a group of 40 students enrolled in capstone courses. To determine a benchmark, the same exam was given to 215 students in the school’s introductory survey class. The competency saw moderate improvement between the two groups, with 11.6% more capstone-enrolled students correctly answering the questions.

Unfortunately, the assessment team could not find a mechanism with which to have industry professionals evaluate capstone projects for this competency. Because evaluations were based on final products — not the process by which they were created — it was unclear to what extent students were evaluating one another.
Senior perceptions of their ability in this area showed that 36.4% strongly agreed, 50.9% agreed that their evaluation skills are improved as a result of completing their degrees in the A.Q. Miller School.

**SLO 12: Apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.**

Objective 12 of the A.Q. Miller School core competencies requires that graduates of the program be able to apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world. This competency was measured using two direct tools.

In the capstone courses for each sequence (advertising, public relations and journalism and digital media) final group projects were evaluated by industry professionals for the ability to effectively use technology. Professionals averaged a rating of 3.6 (out of 5) in the category of theory application. As the school set an acceptable benchmark of 3.1, this was a positive recognition of the program’s ability to teach this competency.

That figure is reinforced by the second direct measurement — the senior assessment exam. The exam asked four questions related to tools and technology usage to a group of 40 students enrolled in capstone courses. To determine a benchmark, the same exam was given to 215 students in the school’s introductory survey class. The competency saw strong improvement between the two groups, with 14.9% more capstone-enrolled students correctly answering the questions.

Indirect measurement of Senior attitudes shows that 32.7% agree with the statement “I can use tools and technologies appropriate to the communications profession and to my chosen sequence area,” while 52.7% agree.

*Describe the process by which the program faculty reviewed the results and decided on the actions and/or revisions that were indicated by those results.*

The assessment data was tabulated and analyzed by the A.Q. Miller School’s standing committee on assessment in late April. The results were condensed into easy-to-read reports that summarized assessment results, which were shared with the faculty at the third faculty curriculum retreat on May 19. At the retreat, faculty used the data in crafting a new core curriculum for the School.

*Describe the actions or revisions that were implemented in response to the assessment results.*

As the faculty drafted the new core curriculum for the A.Q. Miller School, the following assessment results became action items in the curriculum design.
• **Finding:** Students are getting a good exposure to media ethics issues in their course work as reflected by assessment results. **Action:** The faculty did not see the need to add an ethics class to the core curriculum (an action that had been proposed before the assessment).

• **Finding:** Teaching research skills and data application has been inconsistent across the curriculum. While students scored fairly well in data interpretation in their capstone projects, reviewers were critical of students’ overall ability to design research for strategic campaigns. While there were flaws in how we ascertained data and research design, the inconsistency in how we teach these skills remains. **Action:** The faculty will adopt a core research class that students across all sequences must take. The class will be designed to teach practical skills in conducting research and analyzing data.

• **Finding:** The finding that history is a weakness in our curriculum is problematic, since the historical perspective is a critical component of all media work, especially in reporting and strategic campaigns. One problem here is with our assessment procedures. In assessing senior capstone projects, our rubric included history as one of the eleven areas of evaluation, which from the committee’s standpoint meant providing background in news stories and strategic campaigns. It is possible that reviewers did not understand this practical use of history and gave the capstone work lower scores in this area. The assessment exam contained several questions relating to mass communication history; yet, it’s highly possible that the questions could have been too detailed. **Result:** History is not a required course in the JMC curriculum. We have relied on students to gain an appreciation for media history in various courses that are required, such as MC 110 or MC 466. If the class is to remain an elective rather than a required class, history should be an element of more classes, allowing students to have “refresher” content as they matriculate through the curriculum. Moreover, the assessment exam likely needs to focus on less specific questions in this area, and we need to re-examine our efforts to incorporate history in the grading of senior capstone work.

• **Finding:** While writing scores were acceptable, anecdotal evidence from faculty members and some comments from reviewers suggest that writing is an aspect of our curriculum that nonetheless needs major improvement. **Action:** At the May 19 retreat, faculty members proposed a new “gateway” course devoted to teaching students to write across all media platforms and exposing them to basic grammar, spelling and punctuation issues. Pending approval, the course would be the first of two basic writing classes students would take. This process should help us better identify “at risk” students who do not have the requisite writing skills for Journalism and Mass Communications work, while fortifying the expectations that students in this major need to have good writing skills.

• **Finding:** Evaluating SLO 10 (“critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness”) was problematic using our current assessment measures. Only one question on the assessment exam related to evaluation of work, and that question only related to writing evaluation. The objective could not be used in senior capstone evaluation. **Result:** Moving forward, the assessment team plans to add another direct measurement for this competency by having seniors take part in the same capstone evaluation process as the industry professionals, and
gauging the seniors’ ability to accurately pinpoint strengths and weaknesses of those projects.

Overall, we have concluded that seniors generally do better on the assessment exam and in project applications when a learning objective is repeatedly covered in several classes, as opposed a course dedicated to specific subject matter. As our faculty decides on a new core curriculum, they must consider the fact that meeting our learning objectives is partially the responsibility of all classes in the School in addition to dedicated courses.

**Briefly describe the long range plans to assess all of the outcomes of assessing over a sequence of years.**

Assessment of student learning outcomes is a constantly evolving process, and our assessment plan is still in a state of revision. This year, we abandoned the “course embedded” assessment procedures that we had used since 2004, and, prompted by pressure from our national accrediting agency, we switched to a process where we assessed student mastery of learning outcomes through two direct procedures: an assessment exam that contains questions pertinent to the program’s 12 learning objectives; and professional review of senior capstone projects produced in MC 580 Media Convergence, MC 640 Advertising Campaigns and MC 645 Public Relations Campaigns.

We found the assessment exam to be problematic in terms of 1) developing questions that accurately measure student competencies and 2) securing student cooperation in taking the exam. We are currently analyzing the method and will make changes before repeating the procedure next year. But we found that the exam did allow us to at least have some measure all competencies, which had been a problem with the old “course embedded” method, which was dependent on getting adequate data to analyze and the frequency of course offerings.

Analyzing senior-level capstone projects was especially helpful in providing analysis of student creative, production and writing skills. The problem with the method was that not all 12 learning objectives were necessarily applicable to the assessment of the student projects (as covered above). We anticipate the need for further development of this procedure.

The assessment committee drafted a new assessment document at the end of the year that formalizes these direct procedures, as well as indirect methods that also seek student and alumni reactions to our program. While we anticipate further changes in the procedures themselves, we believe that the enclosed document will continue to guide general assessment practices for the future.

**Submit a one or two paragraph summary that defines the student achievement of your program’s learning outcomes (this must include supporting data).**

The A.Q. Miller School generally excels in meeting our learning objectives, as evidenced by scores in most areas on the senior assessment exam and the capstone project evaluation. Senior competencies are especially proficient in the following:
• media law (seniors scored 18% better than did students in the MC 110 class on the assessment exam and achieved 4.053 on the capstone project)
• domestic diversity (seniors showed a 9.6% improvement over MC 110 students on the exam and achieved 4.078 on the capstone project)
• global diversity (seniors fared 15.8% better than entry level students on the exam and achieved 3.508 on the capstone project)
• ethics (seniors had 23.2% improvement on the exam over the baseline MC 110 students and achieved 4.043 on the capstone project)
• research (seniors performed 9% better on the exam than MC 110 students and achieved 3.605 on the capstone project).
• tools and technologies—or production skills (Seniors scored 14.8% better on the exam than the baseline MC 110 students and 3.7 on the capstone evaluation).

The curriculum appears to have some areas where we feel that students should attain higher scores. History, for example, exceeded the 3.1 benchmark on the capstone project evaluation, although the criterion for evaluating history was less clear to the people grading student work. On the assessment exam, seniors scored 48.2%, which is not a desirable score when compared to MC 110 students, who actually scored better than seniors at 48.8%.

Writing achieved acceptable scores on face value (13.2 % improvement between Seniors and the baseline MC 110 students on the exam, and 3.68 on the capstone evaluation), yet professional reviewers' comments were largely critical of student writing skills.

Results in other areas are inconsistent (and inconclusive), due to errors in the design of the related assessment procedures. For example, creative and critical thinking scored well on the capstone project evaluation (3.958) but poorly on questions relating to this area on the exam (30%), and analysis of the procedures revealed an inconsistency in the design of basic questions relating to this SLO. The Assessment Committee has made note of the errant procedures, and adjustments will be made for the next cycle.

Alumni Satisfaction Survey

A second indirect measure was the Alumni Satisfaction Survey, conducted by the University Assessment Office. The instrument was administered to A.Q. Miller School alumni who graduated in 2012, a procedure that gives respondents enough time to be in the job market and yet have recent knowledge of the program and its operations.

Unfortunately, the Assessment Office did not include direct questions about the A.Q. Miller School’s 12 learning objectives. Yet, some things about our program and curriculum do come to light, and, as can be expected, alumni have experienced enough of the marketplace to offer good advice.

The survey shows that 64.7% of the respondents (N=37) said that their University experience had increased their knowledge and understanding in the profession, while 55.9% said that JMC had helped them gain knowledge and skills required for a career. Fifty percent said that their overall K-State experience had “very much” helped them “increase their intellectual curiosity” while 44.1% said that college had helped them become more aware of world issues and pressing problems. Respondents felt that more
emphasis should be placed on the following areas: developing interpretive skills (21.2%), gathering information (27.3), developing the ability to make sound decisions (36.4%), awareness of perspectives around the world (36.4%), realizing the need to understand the past (27.3%), gain awareness of multiple perspectives in U.S. society (39.4%), research (24.2%) and understand how individuals and groups influence the environment (33.3%).

In terms of research, scholarly and creative activities, 45% of respondents said they were involved in such projects either in classes or in some cases, outside of classwork. And 33% said their mentor provided an excellent contribution to their undergraduate endeavors.

Qualitative comments about the JMC curriculum indicated the need for more faculty (especially in public relations), better advising, more—and better—technology applications, and an overall need for higher academic standards.

In terms of employment, 88% of respondents said they are employed for 35 or more hours per week. Six percent of the respondents said they were currently enrolled in a graduate or professional program (50% of those respondents said their undergraduate education was good preparation for graduate school). Twenty-nine percent said they got a job very close to the type of job they were looking for, while 48.4% said their current job was “fairly close” to the job they desired (19.4% are employed in jobs that are “not very close” to jobs they were seeking).

Respondents reported the following skills required of them in the marketplace: technology skills (90.3%), conducting research (38.7%), extensive training (41.9%), math skills (32.3%), problem solving/analytic reasoning (74.2%), speaking to a group (71%), use of specialized software (77.4%), working with a diverse group of people (77.4%) and writing reports, memos, papers and publications (74.2%).

Clearly, the data revealed in the alumni survey can help the School’s assessment and curriculum committees at a time when the faculty is engaged in discussions about the best direction for the new core curriculum. Future surveys should contain more precise questions relating to the School’s learning objectives, facilities, and other operational aspects of the A.Q. Miller School.