Spring 4-15-2014

A Qualitative Study of the Effectiveness of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Journalism Program for Preparing Students for the Workplace

Sarah Anne Carter Rosenbaum

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, sarahannecarter@hotmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/journalismdiss

Part of the Communication Technology and New Media Commons, Journalism Studies Commons, Mass Communication Commons, Public Relations and Advertising Commons, and the Social Media Commons

A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF

NEBRASKA-LINCOLN'S JOURNALISM PROGRAM FOR PREPARING

STUDENTS FOR THE WORKPLACE

by

Sarah Anne Carter Rosenbaum

A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of

The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Master of Arts

Major: Journalism and Mass Communications

Under the Supervision of Professor John Bender

Lincoln, Nebraska

May, 2014

A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF

NEBRASKA-LINCOLN'S JOURNALISM PROGRAM FOR PREPARING

STUDENTS FOR THE WORKPLACE

Sarah Anne Carter Rosenbaum, M.A.

University of Nebraska, 2014

Adviser: John Bender

Journalism is changing at a rapid pace with every new technology and tool being released. Within the past year, Twitter's Vine, Instagram video, and Google Glass are examples of technology that has emerged and journalists have incorporated them into their news coverage. Journalism education is faced with the task of figuring out how to best educate journalists so they are prepared for the current workplace. The balance is sought between teaching traditional journalism skills and knowledge and teaching the ability to use the latest technology. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln's College of Journalism and Mass Communications (UNL CoJMC) has made changes to its curriculum to try to best prepare its students. This qualitative study asked recent UNL CoJMC journalism graduates how well they felt UNL prepared them for workplace. Graduates were asked about how valuable both journalism and non-journalism courses were to them, if they had internships and how useful they were, what skills they needed to learn when they started working, and if their professors were relevant. Graduates were also asked to provide feedback on where the school was doing well and where it could use some improvement. The graduates also gave advice to future journalism students. The qualitative nature of the study provides personal experiences and specific details that UNL's CoJMC can use to improve its journalism program.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Huntsville Item in Huntsville, TX, is looking for a reporter
who is highly motivated and curious enough to investigate and break
major news stories. We are looking for someone who can produce well-
written, hard-hitting daily stories, as well as short- and long-term
enterprise assignments. The ideal candidate will possess a keen sense for
news, can generate interesting story ideas, is a team player, has a positive
attitude and can work with a collaborative spirit with others within daily
deadline pressures. The candidate must also be Internet and social media
savvy and possess online skills to include writing brief web clips and
posting stories to a website, as well as shooting videos and taking
photographs. Experience with page design and pagination is essential
utilizing Quark and InDesign.

The above ad is from http://www.journalismjobs.com for a job posted on January

8, 2014. Is journalism education changing fast enough to keep up with the technology

used day-to-day in the workplace? Freshmen entering college to study journalism will

graduate four years later into a very different world regarding how media are produced

and consumed. Will what they are taught during those four years prepare them properly

for a newsroom job? Or will they find themselves far behind current journalism

practices?

In a 2013 Poynter Institute study of 1,800 journalists and journalism educators,

only 39% of educators and 48% of journalists felt that journalism education was keeping

up with the changes in the media industry. Only 26% of the journalists felt the person

they most recently hired had "most" or "all" the necessary skills (Flaherty, 2013). At a

2013 job fair at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism, Virgil Smith, vice

president of talent acquisition and diversity at Gannett, said, "Clearly, we want people

who have multimedia skills and understand the transition from print to digital" (Flamm,

2013, para. 2). Journalists who have digital skills will probably edge out those who do not

(Flamm, 2013).

Jill Holbrook, an American University communication studies major, thought that when she graduated, she would mainly use the writing skills she learned through her journalism studies. However, she has also needed to learn to blog, tweet, shoot and edit video, and edit sound for radio. "She knows how to do a little of everything, but sometimes she frets that she does not do any of it very well" (Macy, 2009, para. 58). Briener (2013), director of the Global Business Journalism program at Tsinghua University in Beijing, writes that current journalism graduates are expected to know (at least) how to shoot and edit video, write for the web, analyze data to produce interactive maps and graphics, how to interact with an online audience and scour it for leads, sources, and facts, how to program web pages, and understand how to conduct themselves ethically. "The market is putting less importance on the degree a person has and more on the skills" (Briener, 2013, para. 10).

The Philadelphia Media Network tries to have iPhones and laptops available for the *Daily News* and *Inquirer* reporters. Photographers carry digital and video cameras. Photo editors have iPads and the company would like for the reporters to have them, too. The network realizes that Twitter and Facebook are now part of the storytelling process – either as sources or for spreading news (Jordan, n.d.).

> On a typical assignment, a reporter is expected now to report from the scene, photograph it if possible, post information on Twitter, file 150 to 200 words for the digital story, update a blog or the news organization's Facebook page, then write an article for the newspaper that will be published the next morning (Jordan, n.d., para. 6).

Since starting research for this thesis in the spring of 2013, several new technologies have already affected the journalism world – Vine, Instagram video, Jelly, and Google Glass. Twitter released Vine as a video-sharing app in January 2013. Videos

were limited to 6 seconds in length (Heath, 2013). A few months later, Instagram, a popular photo-sharing app, added a video recording and sharing feature. Videos could be up to 15 seconds in length (Crook, 2013). Jelly was introduced on January 7, 2014, and is a search engine that uses a person's social network to find answers. People can ask questions with or without pictures to people in their network. It works with existing social networks, allows information to be sent out via text or e-mail, and allows picture editing ("Introducing Jelly," 2014). While Google Glass is not available to the general public yet, it is already being examined for journalistic uses. Google Glass is a pair of glasses that is connected to the Internet via a wireless connection and can do many of the things a smartphone can do. Google Glass could let a reporter go live on air with video without having the typical video gear. Interviews could seem more personable without the video gear present, too. However, there are privacy concerns because people could be filmed and interviewed without their expressed consent very easily with Google Glass. Other companies are also developing wearable cameras and digitized glasses (Reid, 2014).

In the midst of all these technology changes, journalism education is facing many changes and many critiques. In 2012, a call came out from six leaders of organizations that provide grants for journalism education, including Eric Newton of the Knight Foundation, to university presidents regarding journalism education. The leaders called on the presidents to support reforming journalism curriculum by creating access to journalism professionals, teaching students the latest technological tools, and offering more collaboration opportunities. "Schools that favor the status quo, and thus fall behind in the digital transition, risk becoming irrelevant to both private funders and, more

importantly, the students they seek to serve" (Bell et al., 2012, para. 8).

This qualitative study hopes to examine how the current journalism instruction at one college prepares its students for the workforce - The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) - and offer specific suggestions for UNL's curriculum based on the experiences of its graduates. Qualitative research offers a chance to try and find meaning and understand experiences from people. Quantitative studies may offer statistics on how many journalism students find their programs relevant to the workforce, but a qualitative study can offer insight into how exactly the courses were relevant and why (Merriam, 2009).

Among UNL's graduates are many Hearst Journalism Award winners. The university is also part of the Dow Jones News Fund Editing residency program, which consists of only seven universities. UNL is one of 12 journalism schools that are part of the Carnegie-Knight Initiative on the Future of Journalism Education ("College of Journalism," n.d.). The Carnegie-Knight Initiative was started in 2005 after the prompting of a 2002 Carnegie Corporation of New York gathering about revitalizing journalism education and a 2004 report that interviewed 40 news leaders on how to improve the education of future journalists. The initiative involved curriculum enrichment, a News21 internship program with annual investigative reporting projects, and a task force that would conduct research and give a platform for educators to present ideas. Five universities were part of the original initiative in 2005 and seven schools were added in 2008, including UNL. Each school's president had to commit to support the initiative. Grants were awarded to help the schools reach their goals ("A Report," 2011).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Journalism education in America can trace its roots as far back as 1869 when Robert E. Lee offered a scholarship for journalism studies at Washington College (now Washington & Lee University) (Josephi, 2009). Colleges were moving toward a more vocational training role in the 1870s and beyond (Bajkiewicz, 2009). Lee died before journalism was part of the university's program ("History of journalism," 1936). Newspaper operations were still small back then and courses focused on writing, editing, and printing (Josephi, 2009). College training was urged for newspaper editors by the editor of *The Gazette of the United States* in 1789. Farmers' High School's board of directors (now Pennsylvania State College) in 1857 proposed the idea of having journalism in the curriculum ("History of journalism," 1936).

The first organized journalism curriculum was offered at the University of Pennsylvania from 1893 to 1901 (Emery & Emery, 1998). Journalism education was mainly on-the-job training until the second half of the 20th century. In the U.S., there were 14 universities that offered journalism courses between 1873 and 1903. Cornell had a certificate of journalism program ("Journalism education," 2010). In 1912, more than 30 universities offered journalism courses (Mott, 1941). The University of Illinois added a journalism program in 1904. The first school of journalism was established at the University of Missouri in 1908 ("History of journalism," 1936). The Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University was established with donations from the owners of the Chicago Tribune in 1921 (Emery & Emery, 1998). In the early journalism programs, the focus was on reporting, editing, ethics, history, and different styles of writing (Johansen, Weaver, & Dornan, 2001).

> [Reporters] were an unlikely collection of itinerant scribblers, aspiring or more often failed novelists, ne'erdo-well children of established families and, most importantly, the upwardly mobile children of immigrants with an inherited rather than an educated gift of language, without much education and certainly without much refinement (Carey, 2000, p. 16).

Education was thought to be a way to make reporters better, even to "domesticate" them (Medsger, 1996, p. 54). Joseph Pulitzer wanted to endow a school of journalism, but the idea did not take off right away (Medsger, 1996). Pulitzer worked as a publisher (Johansen, Weaver, & Dornan, 2001). Pulitzer offered to Columbia University and Harvard University a $2 million endowment for a journalism school, but only one could accept the offer. Harvard wanted to teach journalism alongside business and advertising. Pulitzer was requiring that business aspects not be taught alongside journalism (Bajkiewicz, 2009). It took some convincing before Columbia accepted the proposal. The goal of the original programs was not just to educate journalists, but to have better journalism, which would in turn created better-informed citizens (Medsger, 1996). Pulitzer had a great influence on the original journalism curriculums. He focused on students having a liberal arts background with journalism skills ("Journalism education," 2010). Pulitzer's curriculum included law, ethics, history, principles of journalism and news, and accuracy (Bajkiewicz, 2009). He, too, never saw his idea come to life since he died before the journalism school opened in 1912 ("History of journalism," 1936). The School of Journalism at Columbia opened as a graduate school instead of undergraduate school, which is not what Pulitzer intended. Pulitzer wanted to give journalists the opportunity to have a liberal arts education (Josephi, 2009).

Practical Journalism by E. L. Shuman was published in 1903 (Mott, 1941). Many textbooks in journalism and journalism history were written in the 1920s, and during this

time period the first journalism research journal was founded, *Journalism Bulletin* (now *Journalism Quarterly*) (Emery & Emery, 1998). In 1909, two professional journalistic societies were formed – one at DePauw University and one at the University of Washington. A code of ethics was developed in 1910 by Kansas editors. National Newspaper Conferences were held at the University of Wisconsin in 1912 and the University of Kansas in 1914 (Mott, 1941). The American Association of Teachers of Journalism was founded in 1912 and the American Association of Schools and Departments of Journalism was established in 1917 (Emery & Emery, 1998). In the 1920s at Wisconsin University, journalism studies were put in the political science and sociology department so that the focus could be on research. After several more universities added journalism studies, three main models of study emerged. Journalism was either its own department, a department under the liberal arts college, or part of the communications studies department (Josephi, 2009).

Journalism research started in 1944 at the University of Minnesota, which then led to other schools offering doctoral studies in journalism (Johansen, Weaver, & Dornan, 2001). Accreditation started in 1947. In the 1950s, some journalism programs were shifted under communications studies at universities. This may have affected the effectiveness of journalism education and its contributions to the journalism profession by removing the focus solely on journalism (Medsger, 1996).

Journalism has been debated to be a trade or a profession. A trade needs only the training to do that job to do it well. A profession needs a wide background of education to do the job well. While journalism is not a licensed profession in America and anyone can be a journalist, there is professionalism to journalism that is done well (Josephi, 2009).

Many fields of study have a specific body of knowledge that must be studied to practice in that field. These courses are required and are not to learn skills, but to learn about a topic. However, in the journalism field, the core body of knowledge usually involves learning specific skills, like interviewing and writing. Many journalism curriculums do not even require a journalism history course. No set core knowledge has been decided upon across the board for the field of journalism (King, 2008). However, as a profession, journalism plays a pivotal role in society, has a corporate structure, uses a specific body of knowledge, and has an ethical framework. Journalism is also afforded constitutional protections and is respected by society (Reese & Cohen, 2000).

The world of journalism has changed greatly in the past decade. "Media markets no long require long-term perspectives and planning, but an ability to adapt to today and tomorrow's changes to keep up with the customer" (Boers, Ercan, Rinsdorf, & Vaagan, 2012, p. 53). Many news organizations that used to focus solely on one method of journalism such as radio, TV, or print, are now producing all three, and have added the web and social media to their workflow. Smartphones now allow people to get news instantaneously; social media are often the first source of news for some people. Success in journalism can mean the ability to develop "cross-channel" (p. 55) news stories and do editorial planning across the various media. Boers, Ercan, Rinsdorf, and Vaagan (2012) stressed that the "old" style of journalism was linear – find an idea, pitch a story, write it, have it edited, then publish it. The "new" style is non-linear because the story is told in parts based on what the best medium is for that part – a photo, video, Tweet, blog, poll, graphic, etc. Different parts are told in different ways to be more engaging and informative.

> Digital-first is a new strategy in news where the first place news is put out is in digital (web) format, and then print and broadcast options are pursued. Texas Christian University started following this format in 2012. The University of Oregon does as well, and its publisher, Ryan Frank, said, "We say the 'what happened' goes on online and 'how and why' explanations go in print. Online is about news. Print is about context and meaning" (Lin, 2013, primer, para. 10).

There have been changes to the way people get their news. There is the rise of citizen journalism "… the Internet ... has furnished citizens with the tools to become journalists themselves" (McCaffrey, p. vii). One historic example of citizen journalism happened during the Hudson River plane crash in January 2009. Twitter users beat the mainstream media on reporting the news. Janis Krums was a passenger on one of the commuter ferries dispatched to pick up the stranded airline passengers. He took a photo of the dramatic scene and uploaded it to Twitpic. It was one of the first images of the accident broadcast to the world. It also was something of a revelation to the news industry because it demonstrated how easy technology made it for anyone to be a news provider (Johnston & Marrone, 2009).

> Mixed news media, or mixed journalism, consists of the following elements: (1) newsrooms that produce stories across multiple media platforms, from traditional (e.g. newspapers) to ''new media'' (social media, Twitter); (2) collaborative newsrooms where professional journalists, citizen journalists, and ordinary citizens combine to cover and analyze events and issues (Ward, 2011, p. 394).

Upworthy is a fast-growing media website that focuses on social trends with some news. The editorial director Sara Critchfield said the site tries to focus on what "regular" people want to see and read. The business often looks to not hire professionally trained journalists because the journalists have been taught a certain definition of news and Upworthy does not follow a set definition. One main difference between Upworthy and traditional journalism is that the company does not try and separate the human bias from

the data. "No post gets published without gut-checking its author to see how committed they are to the larger cause it's meant to represent" (O'Donovan, 2013, para. 21).

Buzzfeed is another media site that does not follow the traditional format of what is and is not news by focusing on social content with news. For example, a quiz on what type of Jane Austen character you are most like is next to an article on women Olympians at Sochi. Other sites and apps are also letting users create their own new compilations by pulling news from certain sites, feeds, or blogs. Some of these are Pulse by LinkedIn, Feedly, and Flipboard. One site, http://www.contributoria.com, is a collaborative online media site where journalists can work together on topics to be published on the site. It was the winning idea for a News Innovation contest from the International Press Institute. Finished articles are available to the public for use through a creative commons license.

Despite the new trends in news, the arguments for changes in journalism education can be traced back for decades. According to Du & Thornburg (2011), the gap between journalism education and the journalism workplace in regards to skills has been mentioned in literature as early as 1967 and the 1980s, although the history of debating learning skills on the job vs. formal education goes back even farther. Du & Thornburg (2011) did a study on the gap that focused on online journalism. Instructors and journalists were surveyed on what skills they thought were most needed in journalism, what duties were common in the workplace, and what concepts were most valued for the job. Their answers were then compared. Both groups highly valued basic journalism skills, such as grammar, style and news judgment, but they reported a lack of instruction on online journalism tools like HTML, video production, and user-interface design. Instructors' views of what online journalists did day-to-day varied greatly from what was

actually done by the journalists. Part of that may be because only 8% of the instructors had online newsroom experience. The journalists and instructors also differed on what concepts were most valued – multitasking by journalists and news judgment by instructors. By not seeing eye-to-eye in most categories, except traditional journalism skills, those surveyed helped provide evidence of the "gap" between journalism education and journalism practice.

Lepre and Bleske (2005) studied the differences between journalism educators and magazine editors. The survey involved 60 educators who focused on magazine writing and 79 magazine editors. Both groups agreed on writing being the most important skill. Educators focused on skills, magazine courses, and portfolios, while the editors focused on subject matter knowledge and social skills. Editors did not mention portfolios. While editors did list computer skills in their top five desired skills, the study did not ask specifically about digital storytelling skills. This is probably due to the survey taking place nine years ago.

In 2000, Dickson & Brandon conducted a survey of newspaper and broadcast professionals and educators. There were differences in how each group viewed the skills that journalists should have. Educators valued journalism skills, conceptual media courses (history and theory), and professional media courses more than the professionals. The professionals ranked language and writing skills higher. Professionals also valued practical job skills higher than educators.

About 40 percent of journalists in about 21 countries have journalism degrees. The numbers are higher among journalists younger than 30 years of age. Journalism schools can either focus on being a training center for the needs of the profession (such as

having digital storytelling and social media skills) or focus on innovation and preparing students for future changes in the field. However, often times, both focuses are expected from the students and the media professionals (Dueze, 2008).

According to Jones (2009) the debate usually centers on whether education should focus on reporting and writing skillfully or adding "specialized knowledge," such as marketing, web skills, law and/or business (p. 219). At the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, students learn online and marketing skills. Should marketing be a part of journalism since it might drive journalists to choose stories that will sell rather than what is important for people to know? The school's former dean John Lavine says, "Great journalism is worthless if no one sees it" (p. 219).

Journalism graduates need to find a balance between learning fundamental skills and learning the latest technology in the workplace. Today's main concern, mentioned in "Learning to Do it All" by Powers (2012), is that journalists either do not have solid journalism skills or do not have expertise with multimedia skills. Some students, like Arelis Hernandez at the University of Maryland, do not want to select one of the three mass communications tracks (journalism, broadcasting, and advertising) but want to learn them all. She took the initiative and filled her schedule with classes from all three. Upon graduation, she got a job as a web director for a national magazine. Powers (2012) calls her a "multiplatform journalist" (p. 10). Powers asked several people in both journalism education and industry about what kind of journalist needs to graduate from universities today. "Employers want young journalists to be adept at working in teams to create stories for multiple platforms and engage audiences using social media," said Chris Harvey, Maryland's journalism school director of internships and multimedia instructor

(p. 12). Besides being multiplatform journalists, most of the interviewees agreed that data and computational journalism were becoming very valuable skills, too.

Companies are now emerging that do not just take news stories and use digital tools to tell the stories, but they start with what is technologically available and then produce media content. Ezra Klein, a former *Washington Post* reporter, recently joined Vox Media hoping to focus on digital journalism. According to Henry Blodget, founder of Business Insider, digital journalism is as different from print journalism as print is from broadcast. "We are just at the beginning of how journalism should be done on the web," said Klein (Carr, 2014, para. 4).

Lin (2013, journalism graduate) interviewed Andrea Gillhoolley, a 2005 journalism graduate from Penn State University, via Twitter about her experiences in the workplace and her thoughts on journalism education. Gillhoolley wrote that she trains herself on how to use social media to convey stories live. She uses blogs, online chats, and websites to do her research and collects her notes in an online notebook. Gillhoolley recommends that journalism students work at a local newspaper, especially with its social media department. Classes should practice writing breaking news, including using Twitter, Facebook, Storify, and other live blogging tools like CoverItLive and ScribbleLive. "You are writing for people checking their phones. … Telling stories digitally is completely different from print. Treat it as such," Gillhoolley wrote from her experience (Lin, 2013, journalism graduate, para. 6).

The "2011 Annual Survey of Journalism and Mass Communications graduates," conducted by the University of Georgia, gave greater details about how well prepared today's graduates are for the workplace (Becker, Vlad, & Kalpen, 2012). Surveys were

returned from 2,195 students from 82 schools listed in the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication school directory. More than 70 percent of those surveyed said they felt they had the skills to "write for the web, edit for the web, use and create blogs, and use the social media professionally" (p. 1). More than half had jobs that involved doing social networking online. However, just slightly more than half said the coursework for their degrees had prepared them enough for the job market. The survey also asked about specific skills the students had learned by the time they graduated. Very few said they had learned web animation and mobile-device content creation, which is creating content geared specifically toward mobile-device screens. Most did say they had learned to write, edit, and create photographs for the web, use social media professionally, and adapt to new technologies.

The numbers did not change very much in the "2012 Annual Survey of Journalism and Mass Communications graduates" (Becker, Vlad, Simpson, & Kalpen, 2013). The percentage of undergraduates who worked with the web dropped to 60 percent, but the number who worked with social media was still more than half. Nearly half also reported that they work with web graphics and photos. The 2012 survey asked new questions regarding coursework at the university the graduates recently attended. About 40 percent said there was too little technical training but 80 percent said they received instruction that stayed up-to-date and enabled them to be successful communicators. The same percentage said that their professors were current and the facilities and equipment at the college were up-to-date. The 2012 survey sample was 1,989 graduates from 82 universities.

"Journalism schools need to rip up the curriculum every year," according to Sheehan (2013). Sheehan blogged about the topic on the Nieman Journalism Lab website after the Journalism Interactive 2013 conference at the University of Florida (UF). Sheehan was the director of the conference and is the director of the UF's 21st Century News Lab. Writing will still, and will always be, key, Sheehan asserted. Sheehan also proposed that journalism students not be taught every technology that is available, but be taught to be flexible, ask the right questions, and use various tools to tell the story in the best way. Resources to teach can easily be found online, including classes, and tools can be learned fairly quickly. Educators do not need to create all classes from scratch when there is so much already available online. Journalists need to be taught how to teach themselves, said Cindy Royal from Texas State University at the conference (Sheehan, 2013).

There are many ways students can take charge of what they are learning and graduate with the right skills for the current media world. Electives can be taken in computer science classes, jobs can be held at media outlets on or off-campus, and courses can be taken outside of the classroom through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) or other online sources. Google has created a media tools page to help journalists know what tools it has and how to use them (http://www.google.com/get/mediatools/).

A website named EdShift launched February 19 to help journalism educators find resources. It also aims to help students and professionals, but the main focus is for educators. Culver (2014) writes that often when she conducts multimedia training for journalism educators, there comes a point where the educators feel overwhelmed by how many tools are available. The site will feature assignments, courses, and curriculum that

have proven to work. It will also host bimonthly Twitter chats, feature training opportunities, offer the newest resources, and give educators a place to share ideas. The site is funded by the Knight Foundation and also features Eric Newton's digital textbook *Searchlights and Sunglasses* (Culver, 2014).

The Carnegie-Knight Initiative released a report in 2011 about how its colleges were doing. UNL was awarded a grant to work on adding math and statistics, science writing, non-fiction writing, and in-depth reporting courses. UNL wanted to build on a 2007 strategic plan that created a new professional journalism concentration for graduate student. The university also wanted to strengthen its partnerships with the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications television and Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. In the end, the university did an in-depth reporting project about the Native American women in the Plains states (which resulted in a published magazine), a report on Bolivia, and the creation of non-journalism classes aimed to teach journalists other skills that could be useful in journalism. For example, a business class was taught to help journalists understand entrepreneurship. The dean at the time of the report, Gary Kebbel, said the university was looking toward curriculum reform ("A Report," 2011).

> Our plan is directly in line with the goals of the Carnegie Corporation to integrate more topical knowledge into our journalism students' education. This approach will continue to expose journalism students to a growing variety of intellectual disciplines. It also will help raise the reputation of the College of Journalism and Mass Communications among many other disciplines on campus (Kebbel, "A Report," 2011, p. 52).

Currently, UNL's College of Journalism and Mass Communications (CoJMC) offers a three majors: (a) broadcasting, (b) journalism, and (c) advertising and public relations. Changes have been made to the curriculum, which will change the visual literacy courses required for all tracks. For journalism students, a course that focused on

both writing and video has been divided into two separate courses with one covering traditional reporting and one covering multimedia "story-telling" ("Your College is Going," n.d., para. 16). UNL's website says the new curriculum will "allow students to acquire depth in a second major within CoJMC with a minimum of extra hours" ("Your College is Going," n.d., para. 19).

Goals for journalism majors are for students to write, report, edit, shoot photographs and video, and design graphics and pages ("Journalism major," n.d.). Classes are offered on visual literacy, digital photojournalism, investigative and computer-assisted reporting, and multimedia news production ("Journalism and Mass Communications," n.d.). Broadcasting majors can choose from the news track (focus on writing and presenting news) or the production track (focus on broadcast technology) ("Broadcasting major," n.d.). Courses include audio and video production and field video production ("Broadcasting, journalism," n.d.). Advertising and public relations majors focus on strategy, planning, and implementing creative problem solving solutions ("Advertising and public relations major," n.d.). Courses include digital insight and analytics, new media design, and writing for digital media ("Advertising and public relations, journalism," n.d.).

One course offered by UNL that could be considered on the cutting-edge of technology involves journalism and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV). According to Ungerleider (2013), journalism students are taught some basics of UAV flying, how to use the still and video feeds captured by the UAVs, the ethics involved, and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations. The footage gathered is then turned into news stories. UNL students worked with the UNL Drone Lab, where other students built

and flew the UAVs. They got video of the Platte River drought and samples of water from the river. The University of Missouri is trying a similar program; however, it is a partnership with the local NPR station, which helped secure a grant for the university to build drones.

Both programs had to make adjustments in the summer of 2013 when the FAA sent them letters saying they must stop flying drones until they got a Certificate of Authorization. The University of Missouri decided to limit its flying to indoors, according to Scott Pham, the university's director of the drone journalism program. The University of Missouri had been flying under the rules that cover "amateur use of remote-controlled model aircraft" (Keller, 2013). However, the FAA is considering the program to be "public aircraft" controlled by a "public operator," which has more restrictions (Keller, 2013).

Matt Waite, a journalism professor at UNL, plans to apply for the permit, which can be a two-month process. While getting approval for the permit will probably not coincide with the timing for news coverage, Waite sees it as an opportunity to learn about the aviation regulations that apply to drones. In the meantime, the students will fly the UAVs indoors as well. "We have a unique position to be able to explore this for the industry before the industry is going to be able to do it themselves," he said (Abourezk, 2013). The program has a website at http://www.dronejournalismlab.org.

The student newspaper at UNL is trying to keep up with technology. On February 21, the editor-in-chief of the Daily Nebraskan at UNL sent out a campus-wide e-mail asking students to sign up for daily news e-mails and breaking news alerts, check out the Daily Nebraskan app, and pick up copies of the Daily Nebraskan newspaper to stay

informed about campus news (H. Konnath, personal communication, February 21, 2014).

In February, the Daily Nebraskan decided to only print twice a week instead of five times

a week. The paper will focus on its website to provide news updates (Fell, 2014). While

the Daily Nebraskan is an independent student newspaper and does not fall under the

CoJMC, it is a way for the UNL journalism students to gain experience ("About us,"

2014).

To assess the success of UNL's journalism program, the UNL Fall 2013 Research

Methods Course e-mailed and/or mailed a 26-question survey to 2011-2013 graduates of

the CoJMC program. There were 72 responses from the 218 surveys. The survey found

that 71 percent of those who work in the media found their studies at UNL "useful" or

"somewhat useful." Slightly more than half of the respondents felt the computers used in

their studies were "somewhat current" and that the media-specific tools were "good" (L.

Shipley, personal communication, January 15, 2014).

Dr. Will Norton, Jr., was dean of UNL's CoJMC program from 1990 to 2009.

Norton said he saw changes to journalism happening in the 1980s and 1990s when

broadcasters were also starting to do print journalism and print journalists were also

starting to do broadcast journalism. This has been called convergence. Norton said he

tried to incorporate those changes to UNL's curriculum but received a lot of push back.

So, he said he waited until the faculty and staff also saw the need for curriculum changes

and wanted them to happen. A new curriculum was passed for multiple platform

journalism in 2006-2007 and was later revised in 2008-2009. "That was really out-of-date

still, but it was … better than what we'd had before," he said. Norton believes that

journalism education is a key part of the liberal arts degree because it teaches writing and

rhetoric. Norton believes that students should be taught how to write messages for different media and that will give a foundation for learning to adapt to the latest technologies. "Once you learn how to adjust for a particular medium, you can learn how to keep up to date – because that's what you're going to have to do all your life," he said. "If you're using the latest technology now, it's not going to be the latest technology four years from now."

Dr. Charlyne Berens is the current associate dean for UNL's CoJMC program and has worked at UNL since 1990. She recalls hardly any curricular changes being made until the mid-2000s. "But then things began to change and they changed really fast," she said. The media were adjusting to a world where everyone could go online and post about any topic – the media could be bypassed. "We looked at that and thought we'd better make some adjustments in order to prepare our students for what they were going to encounter …," she said. A multimedia class was added for broadcasting and journalism students. "Ever since then, we have just been tinkering almost constantly with the curriculum," she said. Berens said visual literacy courses were added so all CoJMC students could have exposure to still photography, video, and graphic design. Web design was also added. While not all the courses are required in each track, the students are all highly encouraged to take all of the courses. The same goes for other courses that used to be only in one track, such as reporting and editing. "So there's far, far more crossover among the different majors than there was 23 years ago when I came," she said. Berens teaches an in-depth reporting class that has traditionally produced a magazine. She is looking at teaming up with the *Omaha World-Herald* and Nebraska Public Radio to have students create products for more than one medium. Berens said that the college is now

looking to make fewer changes to the curriculum, but to instead focus on changes within the required courses so that the teaching material stays up-to-date. Berens also said one of the goals is to expose students to different technologies so they can transfer those skills to newer technologies as they are released. "We want them to understand not just how to use the technology but why. ...What's your purpose? … why am I doing it this way? And how can I make these tools work for me?"

There are many ideas of how to change journalism education to better prepare students for the workplace. Some universities are trying new learning formats in journalism. The University of Missouri is researching the economic factors involved with journalism. Some students at Columbia University in New York City will soon graduate with a double major in computer science and journalism. At the University of South Carolina, students are helping create their own curriculum with instructors giving oversight (Rosenstiel, 2013). Rosenstiel (2013) states there are four things journalism curriculum should look at: teaching technical skills, journalistic responsibility, business savvy, and verification. Dvorkin (2013), a former journalism professor at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada, taught a graduate level class where the journalism students were required to think of new ways to get breaking news out to the public. He used hockey to describe this method of thinking as "going to where the puck will be" (para. 5). Journalism schools need to be training students for now and for the future.

Royal (2013), an associate professor at The University of Texas at Austin, proposes changes to the journalism curriculum that involve introducing more flipped classes, changing the concentrations, and adding more work experience opportunities. Flipping a class is where students watch lectures on their own time and spend class time

doing projects and having discussions. Journalism classes with a digital emphasis could be flipped to let students have more experience with technology and more in-depth discussions. Royal's proposed new concentrations, instead of news, broadcast, and advertising, would be multimedia, programming, and social media. Royal also suggests that work experiences should be tied in to classrooms and not just with working for university media or internships.

One solution proposed for closing "the gap" between educators and professionals is to create a closer tie between newsrooms and universities. The gap is the differences of thought between educators and journalists on what the purpose of a journalism degree is and what skills graduates should have (Lepre & Bleske, 2005). Journalism schools should become "a laboratory for journalism, providing research and development for an industry that is mostly too battered and poor to do its own" (Jarvis, 2012, para. 28). Jarvis (2012) proposed a system in which journalism education provides certifications and uses online instruction and tutoring to reach its goals. Certifications would be portfolio items that would be judged by experts against an established set of criteria. The certification would also show that a student knows specific ideas on a topic, such as why journalists use the tool, how it is used, how to adapt using the tool, how to create, and how to teach others to use the tool (Jarvis, 2012).

Regarding curriculum, Lin (2012) came up with a list of "new" skills journalists should be taught, based on the 2012 Teachapalooza conference held at the Poynter Institute. On the list are data journalism, digital storytelling, mapping and geotagging, mobile journalism, and entrepreneurial journalism (Lin, 2012). Data journalism takes skills from statistics, mapping, graphic design, programing, data mining and database

work to gather and present information. These skills are used to create interactive graphics, websites, or apps (Thiboeaux, 2011). Digital storytelling is using multimedia tools to tell the story instead of just an article or broadcast. This can involve an online article that has a video, interactive graphic, and/or a photo gallery (Tompkins, 2013). Mapping takes a story or data and adds the location factor to make a more complete story. This can involve audience participation and result in stories such as how fast New York City streets are getting cleared after a winter storm (Colgan, 2012). Geotagging is attaching latitude and longitude information to an online object, such as a photo, Tweet, or Facebook status. Journalists can use geotagging to help provide a framework for articles. One such article used Twitter geotagging to report on voter irregularity during an election (Johnson, 2011). Mobile journalism is focusing journalism for the people who consume media mostly via phones and tablets instead of computer screens and print sources. This had led to newrooms with "mobile first" teams that put news out for mobile users primarily and then adapt it to online and print (Bergman, 2013). Entrepreneurial journalism tries to raise money and can try to team journalism with a cause, such as the Media Restoration Project that helps small towns get news coverage when their media outlets have folded (Briggs, 2011).

Lin asserted that these skills should be taught on top of the "old" skills of writing, editing, photo, video, audio, and ethics (Lin, 2012). Waite (2013) suggests that the big picture needs to be looked at – what is journalism's audience and what are its needs? What should the goals of a journalism curriculum be? Waite (2013) suggests the answer is looking for the minimum viable participant – the bare minimum of skills a person needs to be a modern journalist. Waite's (2013) list includes being able to tell stories,

knowing how the Internet works, being able to learn new things on one's own, and being able to run with an idea and make it work.

Mullin (2013) discusses how student newspapers are facing similar crises as mainstream newspapers. A lack of funding and ad sources are causing student newspapers to make hard decisions on how much, how often, and even whether they should publish a print edition. Along with that goes how much the student editor will get paid. The impact of this environment shows the journalism students what the working environment is facing; however, because of this, they may not get as much training in journalism at the college. If a five-day-a-week student newspaper cuts down to two-day-a week, there are fewer opportunities for the students to train on working on an actual newspaper – doing less writing, editing, or page design.

At Montclair State University's Center for Cooperative Media in New Jersey, production facilities and office space have been set up for public broadcasters and media outlets. About six media outlets have made their home at the facility at the university. Students often help with production. The New Jersey News Commons is also located at the center and offers content to pre-approved publishers. Journalism is currently a minor at Montclair, but plans are in the works to create a journalism major in the fall of 2014 (Schaffer, 2013).

Another idea to help prepare journalists proposed by Bacon (2011) is to have newsrooms use universities as a resource to conduct investigative journalism - not just students, though, but educators as well. Bacon suggests that journalism educators should produce journalism content rather than academic research so they can practice their craft. Some educators, by focusing on research rather than their craft, create an environment

where graduate students could be more qualified to teach than many of their professors (Harcup, 2011). According to Birnbauer (2011), some reasons universities may be a great resource for investigative journalism is that universities have a lack of corporate interference, government control, pressure of daily deadlines, and the need to attract advertising (Birnbauer, 2011).

News21 is a Carnegie-Knight program that gathers students from a dozen universities during the summer to work on investigative stories (Birnbauer, 2011). UNL is one of these universities ("News21," 2014). Boston University has a New England Center for Investigative Reporting where journalism students help research investigative stories with local news organizations. Washington State and Colorado are running similar programs. At Boston University, content is provided by students and then the local news organizations either contribute funds, hands-on training to students, or access to newsroom resources. Students also pass along any news tips they come across back to the newsrooms they are working with (Mulvihill & Bergantino, 2009).

The teaching hospital model follows the thinking that as medical schools not only teach their students, but also conduct research and treat patients, journalism schools should not only teach students, but should produce media content and test-run new journalism models. If journalism schools also focused on producing community news, they could increase their value to their universities as well. In a 2011 New America Foundation report, there is a call for journalism programs to work with the local media to produce community news, teach students a broad set of skills, partner with other programs at the universities (like computer science and business), collaborate with other journalism schools, use open education material (like the Poynter Institute website and

NewsU website), encourage the universities to move some journalism skill sets to undergraduate requirements, and focus research on journalism's role in democracy (Anderson, Glaisyer, Smith, & Rothfeld, 2011).

However, not everyone agrees that a teaching hospital model is the correct fit for journalism education. Mensing and Ryfe (2013) argue that a teaching hospital model could bring about slow change because the journalism field is in the midst of changes and not an established, stable field. The metaphor of a teaching hospital can break down when the consistency of medical education and the successfulness of following on into a job in an established practice is compared to the variety of journalism education systems and the lack of stable careers to then work in.

Mensing and Ryfe (2013) suggest using a model of entrepreneurship. This model tries to get journalism education to focus on the demand side by looking at the consumer more than the journalism process. Entrepreneurship creates an environment that looks for change and seeks new ways of doing things. By focusing on, and allowing, experimentation in journalism, universities could create journalists who are capable of going into the workforce and "to save journalism" (para. 20) rather than just continuing yesterday's practices in today's world.

Mensing and Ryfe (2013) go on to suggest curriculum changes based on an entrepreneurship model. There would be foundational courses that would put journalism into the perspective of the consumer. For what does journalism exist and how is it used? There would be skills and methods courses that would focus on outcomes and look at certification by the college of certain skills and portfolios. Sequence courses would move from the traditional three- or four-pronged approach (broadcast, print, advertising, online)

to a more flexible approach with more variety, allowing students to produce in many different specialties. Internships would be more flexible, too, with students pursuing their own interests instead of being able to complete internships only at specific companies. Finally, media literacy would be not just for journalism students, but open to others who might need journalism skills in their fields since more and more citizens are becoming journalists to some degree (Mensing & Ryfe, 2013).

Ellis (2013) asks the question, should journalism students be more like doctors or entrepreneurs in their studies? The teaching hospital method offers the chance for real-world reporting experience, like in the Sacred Heart Model (Ellis, 2013). Sacred Heart University in Connecticut offers a master of arts in communication digital/multimedia journalism for video journalists, documentary photographers, and documentary videographers. Courses are offered in eight-week segments. The program focuses on digital journalism and new media ("MACOMM," 2014). However, Mensing and Ryfe (2013) in the paper "Blueprint for change: From the teaching hospital to the entrepreneurial model of journalism education," challenges the idea that real-world experience is what is needed to help journalism education move forward to face the future. By doing that, students may pick up bad habits and outdated ideas.

> Our argument is that this model, if practiced by many journalism schools, could actually slow the response to change. The metaphor implies that journalism is a settled profession with clear boundaries that needs only to be practiced more rigorously, instead of a field with its most fundamental premises unraveling. Rather than creating conditions for students to help re-think journalistic practices, the teaching hospital model reinforces the conviction that content delivery is the primary purpose of journalism. Put simply, it makes it hard for students to think differently (Mensing & Ryfe, 2013, p. 1).

Using the teaching hospital metaphor breaks down when the established medical field with its scientific breakthroughs are compared to the ever-changing journalism field, according to Ellis (2013).

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications looked at new standards, which would allow for more credits in the journalism major to accommodate digital topics (Newton, 2012). Many universities are starting to alter their curriculums to add more digital skills. George Washington University's School of Media and Public Relations started looking at changing its curriculum over the next five years in the summer of 2013. The school is looking to add data visualization and multimedia skills. The school tried to keep up with current trends by hiring faculty who have a professional background or by using adjunct faculty who are still working in the journalism industry. The school even changed from using Final Cut Pro to Adobe video editing because that is what most major media companies use. The school also sought the advice of former students who are successful in the media field about the school's curriculum (Williams, 2013).

Columbia University is introducing a program called Year Zero where students can learn computer science and journalism skills. The university has started to offer a dual-degree graduate program in journalism and computer science, but has had trouble finding people to enroll in the program, mostly due to lack of computer skills. Year Zero would help people qualify for the dual-degree program. Year Zero is scheduled to start in the summer of 2014 (LaFrance, 2013).

At the University of Iowa, journalism students can assist professional journalists with research, reporting, and writing. It is part of a nonprofit initiative called The Iowa

Center for Public Affairs Journalism. The hope is that students will understand

journalism's role in social responsibility, social justice, and how to understand the

importance of multiple perspectives. Using this type of journalism lab gives the students

a chance to develop their research skills while balancing their academic load (Gutsche,

n.d.). The University of Wisconsin has been trying the same kind of approach to a

journalism lab with stories about wrongful criminal conviction, exploitation of immigrant

workers, and poverty's effect on education in schools (Gutsche, n.d.).

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This study aimed to conduct in-depth interviews with 10-20 Journalism and Mass Communications journalism graduates from UNL who have graduated in the past three years (2010-2013). The main focus is on bachelor degree recipients. However, master's degree graduates who went directly from undergraduate to graduate studies without a break also offer a good perspective for this study. By concentrating on this demographic, the focus can be on those who are going directly from their university studies to the full-time workforce.

The author worked with the CoJMC staff and the alumni office to find interviewees, using their social media sites to recruit interviewees. Posts were made on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn on a weekly basis starting in late December 2013. The author also searched through the University of Nebraska Alumni LinkedIn members, with the permission of the alumni association, for graduates who qualified for the study. They were sent an e-mail. Students contacted the author by e-mail or phone and then an interview was set up. The options for the interview were on the phone, video phone (such as Skype), or through e-mail.

The interviews were transcribed if needed and comparisons and contrasts were made and trends were identified. The students' information will remain confidential and due to thesis committee members possibly being instructors (past, present, and/or future) of the interviewees, even the demographic information will be kept separate from the answers. Sample questions are listed in Appendix A. One of the key areas of comparison will be to see what courses graduates felt were most and least valuable in the journalism and non-journalism categories.

While quantitative studies have been done nationally on how well journalism graduates feel they were prepared for the workforce, doing a qualitative study will give a more in-depth look into this specific school and this specific time. The college can immediately use the results to help the next year's graduates in very specific areas, if any are lacking. UNL will also be able to see what it is doing right for its students. The personal stories of the graduates, combined with statistics from quantitative studies, can give UNL a strong foundation to make any necessary adaptations to the curriculum.

As part of the background research for this study, the author also requested to interview UNL's College of Journalism and Mass Communications most recent deans and current deans about the history of changes to the Journalism and Mass Communications curriculum and if any future changes are being planned. Their responses were on-the-record unless they requested to remain confidential. Sample questions are listed in Appendix C. Their interviews were used in the literature review.

CHAPTER 4: INTERVIEWS AND FINDINGS

Nine interviews were conducted and eight were used for the assessment. The interviews were all completed via e-mail. One response did not qualify because the student has graduated almost nine years ago. Out of the remaining eight responses, three technically did not qualify because they had worked in between getting a bachelor's and master's degree. The study sought students who did not work between degrees. However, their answers were not greatly affected by the time spent in the workforce between degrees and their responses will be part of the study. One of the three is also currently working on a master's degree at UNL, but also graduated from UNL with a bachelor's degree. For the three that spent time in the workforce, one person spent time in public relations, one worked in newspapers and mining, and the other in media relations and videography.

To keep the answers confidential, graduates were only identified by a letter (such as Student A) and were only described by their type of degree and graduation year, if at all. The respondents were three master's degree recipients (2010, 2011, and 2012) and five bachelor's degree recipients (four from 2011 and one from 2012). Those who chose to get master's degrees were seeking to broaden their skills, get a better job, and do media research.

In the workforce, the journalism graduates found jobs working in internal communication, account coordination (liaison between clients and a creative team), television, advertising and then a non-profit, and radio. The graduate students found employment in public relations and as a communications strategist and teacher. Two found jobs through personal connections, three found jobs on the Internet, and three did

not specify how they found their jobs. Two of the undergraduates described their jobs as having the duties that journalism educators are being told to prepare students to have: produce news content for multiple platforms while managing web and social media content.

Only one graduate, who works in public relations, said he or she did not need to learn any new skills on the job. The others had to learn skills specific to the companies they worked for, along with people skills, web analytics, public relations, video shooting and editing, and social media skills. The two graduates with the "typical" journalism jobs (they work in radio news) needed to learn specific programs, such as iNews, Clickability, Newspath, and Anvato, along with social media skills, and how to translate news content from print to broadcast.

All of the interviewees said that their degrees prepared them for their jobs in one way or another. Specifically, they said that the writing skills, computer program knowledge (such as InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator, HTML/CSS), ethics, shooting and editing skills, marketing, news judgment, researching, interviewing, and coding, helped prepare them for their jobs. Two students said they wished they had taken more computer skills classes in regards to coding and design programs. "A degree can't prepare you for everything," said Student I, a former graduate student.

For those who had not been in the workforce before, their expectations for the workforce differed from reality. One had hoped to "escape all of the intern-type work," said Student C. Another said there would be less to learn and another has a lot more responsibility than was expected. "[I] wasn't full[y] prepared for how monetized the news industry is," Student G said, who has a job in radio news. "It all comes down to

how many clicks a story gets and how much advertising can be sold. It's pretty frustrating at times."

When asked if their current jobs were something they knew existed when they started college, five said yes, but three said no. "My job is interesting because it combines radio and editorial," said Student G. "I hadn't thought about it at all and there aren't any classes that cover it. I assumed I'd work at a newspaper."

The journalism courses that the students found most valuable were science writing, web design, writing classes, mass media law, graphics, campaigns, media planning, beginning reporting, AP style, ethics, NewsNetNebraska, production classes, public relations theory and tactics, global advertising, international marketing, mobile app design, and editing. The science writing class helped the student hone writing skills. The web design class enabled the student to join in more projects in the workforce. Campaigns taught the student how to work and collaborate as a team. Media planning helped the student understand how the media schedule works. NewsNetNebraska and the senior broadcasting classes let the students incorporate all their skills in the class. The mobile app class taught the student the web jargon and how web development works. The other classes were valuable because they gave the students background knowledge that applies to their jobs. Student I highlighted the public relations course because, "I really think in the future, journalists and PR people will interchange jobs so much between fields they should be properly trained in both."

Valuable non-journalism classes mainly helped in giving the students background knowledge on topics, such as history, global studies, sociology, political science, economics, statistics, and wine. "You need to know a little about a lot to get by in news

…," said Student E. Practical classes that helped with skills that the students mentioned are English, writing, and literature classes, along with web design and teaching. "[T]he extra practice with different types of writing in those classes was beneficial in broadening my vocabulary and my writing skills," said Student E.

Interviewees were also asked what classes were the least valuable in their journalism and non-journalism classes. For journalism classes, five of the eight interviewees thought all the journalism courses had some value. One of those five mentioned that some projects were not very valuable, such as being taught how to create a podcast. "Seriously, any monkey with access to Google can figure that one out," Student A said. The classes mentioned by the other three were journalism history because it was too in-depth, professional practice because it was non-memorable, Mass Media and Society because it was based on opinions, and Star City News and Videography on the merits that it was very specific and took nine hours of coursework. For non-journalism classes, the interviewees mentioned nutrition, science, math, art history, political science, and biology – mostly because they were not interested in the courses, the courses were mandatory, or because the information did not stick with them.

All of the interviewees agreed that having an internship or a journalism-related job during college was helpful as they all had one or the other. Three said the university should not require internships, two had some reservations about making it a requirement, and three thought internships should be required. The interviewees said internships helped them hone their skills, develop professional relationships, and establish credibility. "It gives you a greater appreciation for the work," said Student B. Student C said the internship worked to "prove to future employers that I could manage my time

between school, work, and holding an internship." Student G said, "You need to work these positions in order for your education to click." While each student lauded the value of internships, the reservations about requiring it were that not every student could afford to work without being paid, students who are motivated will seek out internships, and the industry almost requires it so the schools do not have to. "I think students should be told at the beginning how much internships will benefit them and they should be assisted in finding internships," said Student I.

In regard to UNL professors, the interviewees all agreed that, with few exceptions, the professors were relevant and helpful. Three interviewees mentioned that some professors could have more professional experience, including Student G, who would have liked "some professors who were both teaching and working in the field at the same time." Student E noted that the professors stayed knowledgeable about the trends in journalism and knew what was important in the field today. The majority of the interviewees said most of the professors lacked recent journalism experience. However, most of them did not see it as a detriment. "I always got the sense that the good ones were keeping close tabs on the industry and knew how things were or weren't shifting," said Student A.

Only one student said that journalism studies should focus on core journalism instruction – all of the others said the focus should be on that and on staying up-to-date on the newest technologies. Graduates agreed that solid writing and basic journalism skills (such as editing, grammar, and ethics) are key, but said knowing the newest technologies will make a person more competitive in the workplace. "The current

technologies will change, but students still need to have skills they can hit the ground running with in them, as well as in the more timeless disciplines," said Student F.

Each student has specific suggestions for changes that he or she thought should be made to UNL's journalism education. (See Appendix D for complete answers.) The suggestions involved making the school more selective because there are fewer journalism jobs in the workplace, requiring web-oriented classes, and having more classes taught by adjuncts. Some of the course suggestions were to add courses on proofreading and grammar course for the account service track, orientation for non-traditional students, strategic social media skills, critical thinking, coding, and entrepreneurship skills.

Interviewees were also asked to give advice to current journalism students. (See Appendix E for complete answers.) The theme running through most of the replies was that journalism students should take control of their education and do more than the minimum. Doing an internship was highly encouraged by five of the interviewees. Besides journalism skills, the interviewees encouraged students to take courses in business, foreign language, coding, digital skills, and speech to gain those skills. Courses that give a good background of the world, such as history and economics, were also recommended. Half of the interviewees mentioned taking courses from the other two journalism tracks – broadcast and public relations/advertising – so students have a broader set of skills.

Interviewees were asked to review a list of skills that were cited by various bloggers as skills used in journalism and see which ones they were taught at UNL and

which ones they were taught on the job. Writing, editing, photography, and videography were mentioned by most of the interviewees as skills they used.

With roughly 200 undergraduates and 27 graduates earning degrees each year from UNL CoJMC ("College," 2014), eight students from three years of undergraduate and graduate students who have graduated from UNL does not represent the entire school, but these students do give a small snapshot of how UNL is doing in some areas. Based on this study, UNL's journalism program is doing a good job preparing its students for the workforce. All of the journalism courses have ended up being valuable to the graduates. The professors seem relevant to the students and stay up-to-date with the field. Internships and journalism-related jobs during college are key to students' success on the job. Areas where UNL could improve its journalism program are by adding some courses in areas such as social media skills and entrepreneurship, providing students some more guidance (especially non-traditional students), and adding more adjunct professors who are in the workforce. Courses that focus on digital, computer skills, coding, social media, and that exposed students to the skills of the other journalism tracks would better prepare students for the workforce. Offering students more exposure to what jobs graduates do and how important internships are and how to get them would also help students.

CHAPTER 5: LIMITATIONS

The number of interviewees failed to meet the goal the author set of 10-20 people. Using social media to recruit interviewees ended up being a hit-or-miss method. The author would often get one or two responses within a day of posting, but then no interest until the next posting. During the course of recruiting interviewees, it was found out the Fall 2013 Research Methods Course at UNL had done a very similar study with the same graduation year groups (L. Shipley, personal communication, December 14, 2013). These people may not have wanted to participate in an interview on the same topic they just participated in a study about. The class was able to work with the UNL Alumni Association to get a list of recent graduates to contact them (L. Shipley, personal communication, January 2, 2014). When the author originally contacted the alumni association, they said they could not give access to a list for privacy reasons. The current interim dean, Dr. James O'Hanlon, and future CoJMC dean, Dr. Maria Marron, declined to be interviewed for this study, and while not necessary for this study, their insight could have been used to put the students' answers in perspective.

One oversight in the planning of this study was getting input from employers of UNL journalism graduates on how well prepared they thought their employees were. Their insight could also help UNL when it is considering any changes to the journalism curriculum. Employers could also be asked what exactly new hires are expected to do on the job and what skills they would like them to already have before starting to work. A future study that includes employers' perspectives could be quite valuable.

Some of the questions in the study could have been worded better. (See Appendix A for a list of questions.) Question 19 about whether students had any access to

newsroom training was not specific enough. It should have asked: Did you visit a

newsroom at all during college either as part of a class, internship, or job? If so, please

give details about when, where, why, and what you learned during the visit? A separate

question should have asked the students whether they had worked in a newsroom at all

during college and whether it was part of a class, internship, job, or something else.

Question 22 about the skills the students had learned at UNL or on the job would have

been better set up as a quantitative question to get exact data. The questions about

professors should have been more specific in what was meant by relevant and recent.

Both of the terms should have been defined in the question. Relevant should have been

clarified to mean the professors stayed current with journalism trends and knew what was

happening in the journalism workforce. Recent should have been defined as having

worked in the journalism field within the past 5 years.

The hope is this study will begin the examination of UNL's journalism program's

effectiveness through a qualitative lens. Quantitative surveys can give great data set to

show areas that are doing well and areas that need improvement. However, the hows and

whys can be found by doing qualitative studies. Asking students how current were

computers and programs they used at UNL does not indicate by what standard a student

defines "current." A qualitative study can provide those answers. Asking students to rate

how well they felt UNL prepared them for the workforce does not reveal the specific

areas that helped and did not help. A qualitative study can help fill in the gaps. I would

recommend that during this time period of constant change in the journalism workforce,

UNL's CoJMC conduct annual qualitative studies with recent graduates and employers of

graduates to find out the exact details of how well the program is doing and areas it could

improve. Interviewing graduates six months to two years after graduation could also help UNL track where and how its graduates are being employed, what kind of jobs journalism graduates are obtaining, what skills they are using on the job, and what part UNL's preparation helped them get where they are. Qualitative studies would offer deeper insights and more details and would only serve to help UNL's CoJMC continue to improve its effectiveness in preparing students for the workforce.

REFERENCES

A Report on the Carnegie-Knight initiative on the future of journalism education. (2011).
    Retrieved from
    http://www.knightfoundation.org/media/uploads/publication_pdfs/carnegie_knight_i
    nitiative_2011.pdf

Abourezk, K. (2013, Aug. 24). FAA: UNL lab needs permit to fly drones outdoors.
    Lincoln Star Journal. Retrieved from
    http://journalstar.com/news/local/education/faa-unl-lab-needs-permit-to-fly-drones-
    outdoors/article_b047dac2-3a9a-50c7-a6a5-3f9baa03c1e9.html

About us. (2014). Retrieved from http://www.dailynebraskan.com/site/about.html/

Advertising and public relations major, bachelor of journalism. (n.d.). Retrieved from
    http://journalism.unl.edu/ad-pr_major

Advertising and public relations, journalism and mass communications. (n.d.). Retrieved
    from
    http://bulletin.unl.edu/undergraduate/major/Advertising+%26+Public+Relations/cou
    rses

Anderson, C.W., Glaisyer, T., Smith, J., & Rothfeld, M. (2011, October). Shaping 21st
    Century Journalism: Leveraging a 'Teaching Hospital' Model in Journalism
    Education. Retrieved from
    http://newamerica.net/sites/newamerica.net/files/policydocs/Shaping%2021st%20Ce
    ntury%20Journalism_1.pdf

Bacon, W. (2011). Investigative journalism in the academy - possibilities for storytelling
    across time and space. *Pacific Journalism Review, 17*(1), 45-66.

Bajkiewicz, T. E. (2009). Tracks, silos, and elevators: Postsecondary convergence
    journalism education in the United States. In Grant, A. E., & Wilkinson, J. S. (Eds.).
    Understanding media convergence: The state of the field. Oxford University Press:
    New York.

Becker, L., Vlad, T., Simpson, H., & Kalpen, K. (2013, August 9). 2012 Annual survey
    of Journalism & Mass Communication graduates. Retrieved from
    http://www.grady.uga.edu/annualsurveys/Graduate_Survey/Graduate_2012/Grdrpt2
    012mergedv2.pdf

Becker, L., Vlad, T., & Kalpen, K. (2012, August 9). 2011 Annual survey of Journalism
    & Mass Communication graduates. Retrieved from
    http://www.grady.uga.edu/annualsurveys/Graduate_Survey/Graduate_2011/Grad201
    1COMBINEDbw.pdf

Bell, C., Haas, D., Newton, E., Philipps, M., Ross, B., & Shoemaker, L. (2012, August 3). An open letter to America's university presidents. Knight Foundation. Retrieved from http://www.knightfoundation.org/press-room/other/open-letter-americas-university-presidents

Bergman, C. (2013, February 13). 5 reasons mobile will disrupt journalism like the Internet did a decade ago. Retrieved from http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/media-lab/mobile-media/204107/5-reasons-mobile-will-disrupt-journalism-like-the-internet-did-a-decade-ago/

Birnbauer, B. (2011). Student muckrakers: Applying lessons from non-profit investigative reporting in the U.S. *Pacific Journalism Review, 17*(1), 26-44.

Boers, R., Ercan, E., Rinsdorf, L., & Vaagan, R. W. (2012). From convergence to connectivism: Teaching journalism 2.0. *Online Journal Of Communication & Media Technologies, 2*(4), 52-64

Breiner, J. (2013, September 4). What journalism schools can and can't teach students [blog post]. Retrieved from http://www.mulinblog.com/2013/05/06/a-journalism-graduates-reflections-on-digital-skills-and-j-school-education/

Briggs, M. (2011, March 28). 3 key lessons for entrepreneurial journalists trying to get projects off the ground. Retrieved from http://www.poynter.org/how-tos/leadership-management/entrepreneurial/122890/3-key-lessons-for-entrepreneurial-journalists-trying-to-get-their-projects-off-the-ground/

Broadcasting, journalism and mass communications. (n.d.). Retrieved March 27, 2013, from http://bulletin.unl.edu/undergraduate/major/Broadcasting/courses

Broadcasting major, bachelor of journalism. (n.d.). Retrieved March 27, 2013, from http://journalism.unl.edu/broadcasting_major

Carey, J. W. (2000). Some personal notes on US journalism education. *Journalism, 1*(12), 12-23.

Carr, D. (2013, March 31). Columbia looks ahead in an age of disruption. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/01/business/media/columbias-new-journalism-dean-looks-ahead-in-a-digital-era.html?_r=1&

Colgan, J. (2012, July 7). 7 ways to get your audience to participate in mobile mapping projects. Retrieved from http://www.poynter.org/how-tos/digital-strategies/136667/7-ways-to-get-your-audience-to-participate-in-mobile-mapping-projects/

College. (2014). Retrieved from http://irp.unl.edu/data/degrees-conferred/college

College of Journalism and Mass Communications rankings. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://admissions.unl.edu/discover/majors/184/journalism.aspx#mt-rankings

Crook, J. (2013, June 20). Instagram video vs. Vine: What's the difference? Retrieved from http://techcrunch.com/2013/06/20/instagram-video-vs-vine-whats-the-difference/

Culver, K. B. (2014, February 19). Taking action: EdShift launches to move journalism education forward. Retrieved from http://www.pbs.org/mediashift/2014/02/taking-action-edshift-launches-to-move-journalism-education-forward/

Dickson, T., & Brandon, W. (2000, Autumn). The gap between educators and professional journalists. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator, 55*(3), 50-67.

Du, Y., & Thornburg, R. (2011). The gap between online journalism education and practice: The twin surveys. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator, 66*(3), 218-230.

Dueze, M. (2008). *Journalism education in an era of globalization.* In Loffelholz, M., & Weaver, D. (Eds.). In Global journalism research: Theories, methods, findings, future (pp. 267-281). Blackwell Publishing: Malden.

Dvorkin, J. (2013, June 8). Journalism schools have to go where the puck will be. Retrieved from http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/education/journalism-schools-have-to-go-where-the-puck-is/article12613672/

Ellis, J. (2013, August 21). Do journalism schools really need to be teaching hospitals? Retrieved from http://www.niemanlab.org/2013/08/do-journalism-schools-really-need-to-be-teaching-hospitals/

Emery, M., & Emery, E. (1998). The press and America: An interpretive history of the mass media. Prentice Hall: Englewood Cliffs.

Fell, C. (2014, February 20). DN to reduce print issues, shift focus to online in 2014-2015. Retrieved from http://www.dailynebraskan.com/news/dn-to-reduce-print-issues-shift-focus-to-online-in/article_17021276-9aa2-11e3-8ad6-001a4bcf6878.html

Flaherty, C. (2013, August 9). The J-school bubble. Retrieved from http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/08/09/study-points-gaps-between-how-journalism-educators-and-journalists-view-j-schools

Flamm, M. (2013, April 5). Journalism's decline boosts j-schools. Retrieved from http://www.crainsnewyork.com/article/20130405/MEDIA_ENTERTAINMENT/130409909?template=smartphone

Gutsche, R., Jr. (n.d.). IowaWatch: Nonprofit journalism links students with reporting and learning. Retrieved from http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/professor.aspx?profarticleid=100014

Harcup, T. (2011). Hackademics at the chalkface. *Journalism Practice, 5*(1), 34-50. doi:10.1080/17512786.2010.493333

Heath, A. (2013, January 24). Twitter releases Vine iPhone app for sharing short videos. Retrieved from http://www.cultofmac.com/211993/twitter-releases-vine-iphone-app-for-sharing-short-videos/

History of journalism education in the United States. (1936, March). *Teachers College Record*, 37, pp. 543-545.

Introducing Jelly. (2014, January 7). Retrieved from http://blog.jelly.co/post/72563498393/introducing-jelly

Jarvis, J. (2012, September 18). Jeff Jarvis: Here's a blueprint for radical innovation in journalism education. Retrieved from http://www.niemanlab.org/2012/09/jeff-jarvis-heres-a-blueprint-for-radical-innovation-in-journalism-education/

Johansen, P., Weaver, D. H., & Dornan, C. (2001). Journalism education in the United States and Canada: Not merely clones. *Journalism Studies, 2*(4), 469-483.

Johnson, D. (2011, March 4). Geotagged Tweets offer promise and peril for news. Retrieved from http://www.poynter.org/how-tos/digital-strategies/e-media-tidbits/97903/geotagged-tweets-offer-promise-and-peril-for-news/

Johnston, L., & Marrone, M. (2009, January 16). Twitter user becomes star in US Airways crash - Janis Krums sets Internet abuzz with iPhone photo. Retrieved from http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/twitter-user-star-airways-crash-janis-krums-sets-internet-abuzz-iphone-photo-article-1.408174

Jones, A. (2009). *Losing the news: The future of the news that feeds democracy.* Oxford University Press: New York. (p. 219)

Jordan, G. (n.d.). It's a lesson in digital transformation. Retrieved from http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/professor.aspx?profarticleid=100020

Josephi, B. (2009). *Journalism education*. In Wahl-Jorgensen, K. & Hanitzsch, T. (Eds.). The handbook of journalism studies. Routledge: New York.

Journalism and mass communications courses. (n.d.). Retrieved March 26, 2013, from http://bulletin.unl.edu/undergraduate/major/Journalism/courses

Journalism education: Learning through – and from – history. (2010, March 10). Retrieved from http://meetpress.ca/2010/03/10/journalism-learning-through-—-and-from-—-history/

Journalism major, bachelor of journalism. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://journalism.unl.edu/journalism_major

Keller, R. (2013, August 22). FAA hampers MU J-School drone classes: Program needs certificate to fly. Columbia Daily Tribune. Retrieved from http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/education/faa-hampers-mu-j-school-drone-classes/article_162d9e8c-0b51-11e3-83dd-10604b9ffe60.html

King, E. (2008, Summer). The role of journalism history, and the academy, in the development of core knowledge in journalism education. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator, 63*(2), 166-178.

LaFrance, A. (2013, August 30). Columbia is launching a new post-bac program to breed journalism unicorns. Retrieved from http://www.niemanlab.org/2013/08/columbia-is-launching-a-new-post-bac-program-to-breed-journalism-unicorns/

Lepre, C., & Bleske, G. L. (2005, Summer). Little common ground for magazine editors and professors surveyed on journalism curriculum. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator, 60*(2), 190-200.

Lin, M. (2013, May 6). A journalism graduate's reflection on digital skills and j-school education Retrieved from http://www.mulinblog.com/2013/05/06/a-journalism-graduates-reflections-on-digital-skills-and-j-school-education/

Lin, M. (2013, March 26). A primer for journalism students: What is digital-first strategy? Retrieved from http://www.mulinblog.com/2013/03/26/what-is-digital-first-media-a-primer-for-journalism-students/

Lin, M. (2012, June 22). The gap between journalism education and the (changing) journalism profession. Retrieved from http://www.mulinblog.com/2012/06/22/the-gap-journalism-education-changing-journalism-profession/

MACOMM: Digital/Multimedia journalism. (2014). Retrieved from http://www.sacredheart.edu/academics/collegeofartssciences/academicdepartments/communicationmediastudies/graduatedegrees/mastersdegreeincommunication/digitalmultimediajournalism/

Macy, B. (2009, April/May). Hunkering Down. *American Journalism Review*. Retrieved from http://ajrarchive.org/Article.asp?id=4765

McCaffrey, P. (Ed.). (2010). *The reference shelf: The news and its future.* The H.W. Wilson Company: New York.

Medsger, B. (1996). *Winds of change: Challenges confronting journalism education.* The
    Freedom Forum: Arlington.

Mensing, D., & Ryfe, D. (2013, April 11) Blueprint for change: From the teaching
    hospital to the entrepreneurial model of journalism education. *International
    Symposium on Online Journalism.* Retrieved from
    http://www.academia.edu/3412374/Blueprint_for_Change_From_the_Teaching_Hos
    pital_to_the_Entrepreneurial_Model_of_Journalism_Education

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation.*
    Jossey-Bass: San Francisco.

Mott, F. L. (1941). *American Journalism: A history of newspapers in the United States
    through 250 years, 1690-1940, Vol. II.* Routledge: London.

Mullin, B. (2013, June 17). Student newspapers facing same pressures as pro
    publications. Retrieved from http://www.poynter.org/how-tos/journalism-
    education/215717/student-newspapers-facing-the-same-pressures-as-pro-
    publications/#.UcC3Zk864oY.twitter

Mulvihill, M., & Bergantino, J. (2009, Summer). Filing a local void: J-school students
    tackle watchdog reporting. Retrieved from
    http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/101563/Filling-a-Local-Void-J-
    School-Students-Tackle-Watchdog-Reporting.aspx

News21 Fellowship Program. (2014). Retrieved from
    http://journalism.unl.edu/cojmc/careers/opportunities/news21.shtml/

Newton, E. (2012, September 10). Eric Newton: Journalism schools aren't changing
    quickly enough. Retrieved from http://www.niemanlab.org/2012/09/eric-newton-
    journalism-schools-arent-changing-quickly-enough/

O'Donovan, C. (2013, June 20). 'If you're not feeling it, don't write it:' Upworthy's
    social success depends on gut-checking 'regular people." Retrieved from
    http://www.niemanlab.org/2013/06/if-youre-not-feeling-it-dont-write-it-upworthys-
    social-success-depends-on-gut-checking-regular-people/

Powers, E. (2012). Learning to Do It All. *American Journalism Review, 34(*1), 10-13

Reese, S. D., & Cohen, J. (2000). Educating for journalism: the professionalism of
    scholarship. *Journalism Studies, 1*(2), 213-227.

Reid, A. (2014, January 15). Could Google Glass change the face of journalism?
    Retrieved from http://www.journalism.co.uk/news/could-google-glass-change-the-
    face-of-journalism-/s2/a555596/

Rosenstiel, T. (2013, April 17). Why we need a better conversation about the future of journalism education. Retrieved from http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/the-next-journalism/210196/why-we-need-a-better-conversation-about-the-future-of-journalism-education/

Royal, C. (2013, August 26). We need a digital-first curriculum to teach modern journalism. Retrieved from http://www.pbs.org/mediashift/2013/08/we-need-a-digital-first-curriculum-to-teach-modern-journalism/

Schaffer, J. (2013, July 10). In New Jersey, a university teams up with local news orgs to collaborate for impact. Retrieved from http://www.niemanlab.org/2013/07/in-new-jersey-a-university-teams-up-with-local-news-orgs-to-collaborate-for-impact/

Sheehan, M. (2013, February 26). Breeding Unicorns and Building off Others: Lessons from a meeting of J-Schools and the Field. Retrieved from http://www.niemanlab.org/2013/02/breeding-unicorns-and-building-off-others-lessons-from-a-meeting-of-j-schools-and-the-field/

Thibodeaux, T. (2011, October 7). 5 tips for getting started in data journalism. Retrieved from http://www.poynter.org/how-tos/digital-strategies/147734/5-tips-for-getting-started-in-data-journalism/

Tompkins, A. (2013, March 20). News organizations experiment with 'illustrated storytelling' – a new way to tell serious stories. Retrieved from http://www.poynter.org/how-tos/newsgathering-storytelling/207377/news-organizations-experiment-with-illustrated-storytelling-a-new-way-to-tell-serious-stories/

Ungerleider, N. (2013, February 22). Drones go to Journalism School. Retrieved from http://www.fastcompany.com/3006192/drones-go-journalism-school

Waite, M. (2013, September 3). The minimum viable participant. Retrieved from http://blog.mattwaite.com/post/60195170864/the-minimum-viable-participant

Ward, S. A. (2011). Center for journalism ethics, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Wisconsin-Madison. *Journalism Studies, 12*(3), 392-398. doi:10.1080/1461670X.2010.534910

Williams, A. (2013, June 9). Journalism school tries to keep up with industry shifts. Retrieved from http://www.gwhatchet.com/2013/06/09/news-smpa/

Your college is going to move – to the new 2013-14 bulletin! (n.d.). Retrieved from http://journalism.unl.edu/your-college-going-move-–-new-2013-14-bulletin

APPENDIX A: LIST OF QUESTIONS FOR GRADUATES

1. Demographic data (Age, sex, race, graduate year, etc.)
2. Did you just graduate with a bachelor's or a master's degree?
3. If a master's degree, where is your bachelor's from? Where is it from?
4. Was there any time in between degrees where you worked?
5. If so, where and how long? How did you find that job?
6. Why did you get your master's?
7. Where did you find employment? How did you find it?
8. What do you do in your job?
9. Did you have to learn any new skills on the job? What ones? How was the training?
10. Do you feel your degree prepared you for this job? In what ways? In what ways not?
11. What is different about being in the workforce from what you expected?
12. What journalism courses did you take that have turned out to be the most valuable? Why?
13. What non-journalism courses did you take that have turned out to be the most valuable? Why?
14. What journalism courses were the least valuable? Why?
15. What non-journalism courses were the least valuable? Why?
16. What advice would you give the next year's graduates entering the workforce? What would be the best courses they could take? Which ones should they avoid?
17. What changes do you think should be made to journalism education at UNL? Overall?
18. Is the job you have something you thought/knew existed when you started college? What job did you have in mind when you started college?
19. Did you have any access to newsroom training during your studies?
20. Did you have any journalism-related jobs or internships during your college studies? Did you find it helpful? If so, how?
21. Do you think an internship should be required for journalism students?
22. Review skills and programs exposed to/used on the job (See Appendix B)
23. Were your professors relevant? Academic vs. Professional experience?
24. Did your professors have recent journalism experience?
25. Do you think universities should focus mostly on core journalism instruction, staying up-to-date on the newest technologies or both?
26. *Other questions may arise during the conversations for clarification.*

APPENDIX B: LIST OF SKILLS AND PROGRAMS TO DISCUSS

SKILLS
writing and editing for web
designing and building web pages
research materials using the web
producing audio for web
producing video for web
producing photos, graphics for web
producing animation for web
creating advertising for web
selling ad for web
using web in promotion
creating and using blogs
managing web operations
working on social network sites
designing and creating computer graphics
non-linear editing of moving images, photo imaging
still camera
video camera
write/report/edit for print
write/report/edit for broadcast
produce content for mobile device
shooting, cropping, editing and captioning pictures
recording, editing and publishing audio reports and podcasts
shooting and editing video
creating packages and streaming live reports
interacting with user generated content
interviewing and doing online research
sub-editing, proofreading and headlining, including search engine optimization
geo-tagging, geo-coding and geobroadcasting
digital storytelling

PROGRAMS
web 2.0 tools
Blogs
Wikis
Podcasting
Virtual Worlds-Second Life
Photoshop
Dreamweaver
Flash
HTML (Hard Coding)
iPhoto
Fireworks
iweb

FrontPage (Now Renamed Expression web)
Social Networking (Facebook, Linkedln, MySpace)
Vodcasts (includes video)
Enhanced Podcasts (includes photographs)
PowerPoint
iMovie
Adobe Acrobat
Garageband
Keynote Director

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONS FOR RECENT AND CURRENT DEANS

1. Can you please describe what curriculum changes have been made in the College of Journalism and Mass Communications journalism major in the past decade?
2. Why were those changes made?
3. Which changes were most effective? Least?
4. What changes would you recommend happen in the next few years? Why?
5. What do you think are the most important skills a journalism graduate should learn?
6. What are your thoughts on the idea of journalism professors staying current in their craft instead of focusing on academic research?
7. Do you think universities should focus mostly on core journalism instruction, staying up-to-date on the newest technologies or both?
8. *Other questions may arise during the conversations for clarification.*

APPENDIX D: ANSWERS FOR SUGGESTED CHANGES
TO UNL'S JOURNALISM PROGRAM

Student A: I wish I had a good answer for this. I got a lot out of my time there, but I think I would have got a lot out of anywhere because I was determined to do it. I wanted to gain something from my experience there, and no amount of adjusting or changes can fix unwilling students. Plus, I don't have anything to compare my experience to. I've only gone to one grad school...that said, I think the J-school needs to continue focusing on teaching multiple skills to keep up with the working sector. Journalists are required to do just about everything, and they had better be ready to do it.

Student B: Get real. There aren't many journalism jobs available, yet the J school continues to admit SO MANY new students each year. There aren't enough jobs for them. Make it more selective. Have sophomores re-apply to the J school and submit portfolios of work for eligibility to keep the major (the architecture school does this). It's really disappointing to get done with school and find out that your degree is pointless because the job field is so limited.

Student C: I know the structure changed right as I was leaving, but as dull as it sounds – they need a proofreading and grammar course for anyone on the account service track. Things you always eluded are the things you can never get away from…and can get you in a lot of trouble if they slip past the approval processes.

Student D: It seems too often they have teachers teaching courses for the first time. Between this and having too many specialty courses at the 300 and 400 level, there is not enough effort put into freshman and sophomores. It seems to me juniors and seniors are getting a lot of attention from professors. I think the best courses and the best teaching should be done at the 100- and 200-levels. They should make the curriculum so that it generates working knowledge for each student. For example, if a student is able to slip through without a solid knowledge of AP Style, how to pitch stories, journalism ethics, etc., then they didn't get a good education.

Student E: There have already been positive changes to the journalism program since I graduated, but I believe making web-oriented classes a requirement would be a good change.

Student F: The journalism education at UNL is excellent. The college is incredible, compared to many other colleges at UNL. Keep pushing internships and involvement beyond just classes--that was awesome as an undergrad. Keep offering the really tough, challenging classes and a diversity of class options--they don't need to be for everyone, but they should be available. Have them taught by adjuncts who are CURRENTLY in the field so students know what real life expectations are like.

Student G: Some professors pick favorites (and I stress some, because I had great experiences with several profs). This isn't fair. Everyone pays a lot of money to learn and it makes me sad to think about missed opportunities because someone wasn't as

charismatic.

As a non-traditional student, I sometimes felt like I was treated differently by certain professors. Like, I didn't have the same potential or wasn't as dedicated because I took a break. Clearly that wasn't the case -- but it hurt my feelings when some professors were so surprised that I got an amazing internship after graduation. I just wanted to scream, "Hey guys, I was here the whole time!"

When you come into college in a non-traditional way, it can be confusing. Everyone is talking about living in dorms, or parents paying fees -- and you just can't relate to that. And you don't know the first thing about getting internships -- let alone how to survive on one that doesn't pay. I felt pretty lost my first two semesters. Honestly, a class or group would have been great. There were a lot of us. And, sadly, some just dropped out.

Student I: I'm not sure of the changes they've made since I left, but a concentration on coding/web development, strategic social media skills (knowing how to tweet is not enough), and critical thinking has to be emphasized. Entrepreneurship skills are advised too.

APPENDIX E: ANSWERS FOR ADVICE TO CURRENT JOURNALISM STUDENTS

Student A: My advice: 1. Think about number one. You. You're there to get something out of this deal. This school is there to educate you. You're paying them to do it. So squeeze out every last drop of knowledge, experience and know-how. Determine yourself to accomplish that. Challenge yourself. Chat with your professors about problems, challenges.

2. Do more than the minimum. It's enough to cut together a quick and dirty video that meets all the minimum requirements, but now's the time to try new things and techniques. If spending two hours on a 2-minute video is enough for an A, then spend four hours on it. Try something new, something that wasn't taught in class. You'll still get the A, but you'll have something more than your peers, and that's what it takes. You'll need to stand out among them in the workplace. You'll have to have tried different things, experiences in wider fields and techniques.

3. Focus on skills. Hone your writing. I mean really hone it. You probably aren't near as good as you think you are, so find someone honest and ask them to rip your stuff to shreds. Carolyn Henderson was great for that, and I learned a ton from it. Learn photography, videography, graphic design, HTML, and CSS. A reporter or PR person who can do all that with some degree of proficiency is a nice pet to have. When I'm asked if we can make a video series, design a new web feature, issue a press release, get photos at one of our events, or edit a blog post, I say, "No problem. I can take care of that for you."

Student B: It doesn't matter what journalism courses you take. What matters is that you have to get internships, and they have to be valuable ones with recognizable media outlets, especially if you desire to not confine yourself to po-dunk rural towns (not that rural journalism isn't awesome, because it is -- that was my thesis).

Student C: I'll speak from my personal feelings/experiences that in advertising it doesn't matter what courses you take. Everyone has the same requirements to graduate – the school work is NOT what gets you hired. It's your attitude, your work ethic, how driven you are to be a part of the community. Go out there are get the internships – even if they aren't paid. You have to have something to show for and build relationships with people who will be willing to fight for you to get that position. Attend AAF events and get involved with anything you can to connect with professionals. It's all about the connections you make to get an "in."

Student D: I would tell them to take as many classes that help with reporting and writing and they should dabble in ADPR courses. I would also tell them to do as many internships as possible BEFORE graduation.

Student E: I would say internships are the most important part of your college career. They enable you to put your knowledge to the test in the workforce before actually entering it. Not only that, but you generally learn more in your internships from hands-on experience than you do in classes. I think the best courses you can take are courses that enable you to be successful in the digital world. Those include coding courses, app

building courses, etc. I think you should avoid courses that are "easy." If you're just taking it because it's easy, it's a waste of your money because it probably means you aren't ever going to use anything you learned in that class.

Student F: I would say take business courses even if you don't feel like you ever want to be in business (just to become more familiar with the processes and the machine of business, which permeates everything); take anything related to international/global marketing or business; take a class that will give you at least one marked, unique skill (whether that's design, statistics, economics, experimental/scientific design, media planning, etc.) Take a foreign language and don't be all obstinate about having to take it-- it WILL benefit you, if you apply yourself. Learn to code. Learn to WRITE--you must know how to write and express yourself eloquently or you will have a hard time getting a job, let alone holding one. And learn to speak in front of a group--whether that be a conference audience or just the audience of your coworkers.

Student G: If you are in broadcast, take more editorial classes. If you are on the editorial side, take more broadcast classes. You will, without a shadow of a doubt, need both skills. If you think you're going to be a TV or radio reporter, great. But you will need to write your own stories. I'm astonished by the poor writing skills some of my radio reporters have.

Try to take elective classes that either teach you skills or give you a broad overview of a subject. It's better to have a wide understand of say, econ, biology and history than to know a lot about basket weaving.

Student I: Take a variety of courses in journalism/PR/advertising, learn to code, and do as many internships as possible. Maybe even take some business/entrepreneurship courses.