

1. Journalism and Mass Communications
BA/BS/MS CIP CODE 90.0499

2. Mission: The mission of the Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications undergraduate program is to provide students the concepts and skills necessary to enter mass communication careers, the tools needed to advance in their careers in a socially responsible way, and the resources to think critically about the role and impact of mass communications in society. The mission of our graduate program is two-fold. One is to prepare students for productive careers in communication and to provide them the intellectual background and training to understand how their media training and the consequences of its practice affect the cultural and civic life of Kansas and the nation. The second is to prepare students who choose to pursue an academic career for entry into a Ph.D. program in communication or other disciplines of the social sciences.

Centrality: The journalism and mass communication program at Kansas State University is the largest undergraduate program in the largest college. The school offers several courses with wide appeal to a cross-section of the university and the college. Mass Communications in Society (MC110) is a designated UGE course; Principles of Advertising (MC320) and Fundamentals of Public Relations (MC325) typically contain more non-majors than majors and are required courses in certain disciplines, such as Landscape Management in the College of Agriculture and Fashion Merchandising in the College of Human Ecology. Additionally, Environmental Communications (MC712) is cross-listed in the College of Agriculture Department of Communications, and Gender Issues in the Media (MC612) is cross-listed in the Women's Studies program of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Uniqueness: The Miller School officially offers only two undergraduate degree programs—a B.A. and a B.S. in mass communications—but the program is divided into four sequences or subject areas: advertising, electronic media, journalism (print and electronic), and public relations. The advertising, electronic media, and public relations sequences are the only specific curricula in the state in those subject areas. The undergraduate program is one of only 110 accredited mass communications programs in the nation. The only other accredited program in the state is at the University of Kansas-Lawrence, which is structurally and philosophically different from the program in the Miller School. The M.S. program, although structured similarly to other Master's programs around the nation, is unique within Kansas, offering a program that is attractive to students both within the state and coming from outside who seek a degree with a blend of professional application, theory and management concepts and practices. Within the program, academic and research emphases have been developing in the areas of health and risk communication, small market media, and media performance. Graduate students are involved in both research and scholarly publication in these areas.

3. Quality of Faculty: The School has 17 tenured or tenure-track faculty and 7 non-tenure faculty. Most hold terminal degrees and 17 hold graduate faculty status. All courses in JMC are taught by full-time or adjunct faculty. Graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) are used as assistants in larger classes or as facilitators in labs associated with courses. Faculty are committed to teaching as their primary roles, yet balance research and service with it. Faculty hiring in the past decade has focused on obtaining gifted teachers who also pursue scholarship through research. Faculty productivity has led to increased publication in Tier One refereed scholarly journals, peer-reviewed paper presentations at national and international conferences, books and book chapters, as well as invitations to present at regional, national and international conferences.

4. Quality of Students: The Miller School has exceeded the university's and college's minimum GPA standards for graduation by requiring that all students maintain at least a 2.5/4.0 average. Additionally, the school requires all students enrolling in one of three basic writing courses to pass a Composition Skills Test (CST). Furthermore, students must apply to be admitted to the major. Current students in the major have an average GPA of 3.245; while current pre-major

students have an average of 2.760. JMC students are well represented in honorary societies such as Blue Key and Phi Beta Kappa.

The relatively small size of the Miller School's graduate program has allowed us to be selective in the admissions process. In addition to the University's Graduate School requirements for an incoming GPA of 3.0, the Miller School also requires applicants to provide GRE scores, a statement of career objectives and three letters of recommendation. Simply requiring students to take the GRE exam provides a mechanism to weed out those who have a low level of commitment to graduate study. While our program does not have a mandated minimum score on the GREs, we are generally more inclined to admit those students with scores above the 50th percentile.

5. Student Need: Demand for undergraduate journalism and mass communications study has been and continues to be high. Enrollment in the school in 1997 was 560 pre-majors and majors; in 2001, the number had increased to 829, where it peaked. Enrollment in Fall of 2003, was 708, a reflection of implementation of raised admission standards by the school. Enrollment in the graduate program has been steady at around twenty students since the last program review. However, in the last year more aggressive marketing and the development of a specialization in science communication has already led to an increase in student demand. Our Fall 2004 numbers will be at least 25% higher than the preceding year, and may be nearly 50% higher.

Employment Demand: Because of the wide range of employment opportunities within the various fields of journalism and mass communications, graduates of the Miller School who seek employment in their discipline field, rarely have trouble gaining it. However, it should be noted that because of the liberal arts emphasis of the program, often students major in journalism and mass communications who never intend to work in mass communications but come to us for communication skills that are in demand by employers of all types, as well as to prepare themselves for graduate or professional education. Demand for Miller School graduates in local, regional and national media outlets, as well as advertising and public relations firms remains constantly high.

6. Service: The School faculty serve on college and university committees and several of the faculty are on boards or are officers in key national discipline organizations. Faculty have also made significant contributions including producing statewide TV programs for Kansas Public Television, and coordinating and judging journalism contests. The School is the national headquarters of the Journalism Education Association, and hosts the Huck Boyd National Center for Community Media. Currently the School is in degree programs with the College of Agriculture (Ag Comm), the College of Human Ecology (HECOMM), and the College of Education (secondary education degree with certification in high school media).

7. Cost Effectiveness: Although quality of instruction is encouraged and rewarded in the Miller School, student credit hour generation by School faculty has increased steadily at about 2.1% each year. In 2003, for instance, the school was responsible for generating 11,733 SCH, up from 9,940 SCH in 1999, in spite of a reduction in overall number of majors and pre-majors. The School offers approximately 72 course sections per semester (not counting labs), resulting in an average teaching load of around 2.5 courses per faculty member/per semester. The student/faculty ratio is approximately 25:1.

Equipment costs of instruction are quite high. The School maintains four computer labs for instructional purposes. All but one, a highly specialized editing lab, are used heavily throughout each day, and one is kept open in the evenings for student use. Additionally, maintaining television and radio production equipment costs thousands of dollars annually. Both software and hardware costs average in the tens of thousands each year. Historically, the School has born most of these expenses through endowments, but as costs increase, it is unlikely that the School can continue to offer high quality project labs without implementing a technology fee.