APPENDIX 9-H

Professional Evaluations
2018–2020

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REPORT OF 2018 INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS EVALUATION

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

DIRECT MEASURE

SUMMER 2018 UNDERGRADUATE CAPSTONE AND PROFESSIONAL MASTERS ASSESSMENT OF FINAL PROJECTS BY INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

Evaluating professional deliverables by graduating seniors versus MA/MADC students

In 2017, the assessment team reviewed past assessment activities for effectiveness in evaluating student learning outcomes based on the nature of the evaluations, the evaluators, and the existing data quality. Based on this analysis, the team decided to alter the assessment plan to improve both data quality and effectiveness by changing the administration and content of the undergraduate knowledge pretest/posttest assessment and the senior student experience survey and by launching an assessment of senior student work by high-ranking professionals in the journalism and strategic communication industries to provide another direct measure of student learning outcomes.

This report describes the results of the first launch of this assessment of senior student work by industry professionals. To provide a comparison point relevant to workplace readiness, senior-level capstone projects were compared with projects from the school's master's level students engaged in professional projects. We felt this comparison would be much more meaningful and useful for assessing our senior students' accomplishments and would also be more meaningful time spent by our industry professional volunteers (compared to asking these professionals to evaluate beginning student work, which does not provide a comparison point for workplace readiness or desired/aspirational levels of student learning).

In July 2018, we selected several student projects from fall 2017 and spring 2018 and submitted them for external review. The review panel consisted of five journalism and strategic communication professionals from the MEJO Board of Advisors.

Our reviewers evaluated a random selection of deliverables from senior undergraduate capstone courses, online MADC (Master of Arts in Digital Communication) thesis projects from MADC students graduating in fall 2017, and thesis projects of professional-track residential MA students who graduated in Spring 2018.

We asked these professionals to look at several components of our students' work, including:
- Coverage of topic
- Sources and evidence used
- Organization of information
- Writing mechanics
- Strategic Communication (when there is a strategic communication component to the project)
- Design (when there is a visual/ design component to the project)

This assessment addresses the following ACEJMC values and competencies:

ACEJMC Value/Competency	Assessed Here?
1. Principles and **laws of freedom of speech** and press in the U.S.	No
2. **History and role** of professionals and institutions in shaping communications	No
3. **Gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation** and/or other forms of diversity in relation to media and communications	No
4. **Diversity of peoples and cultures** and of the significance and impact of media and communications **in a global society**	No
5. Concepts and theories in the use and **presentation of images** and information	Yes
6. Professional **ethical principles** and work in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity	No
7. **Thinking critically,** creatively and independently	Yes
8. **Conducting research and evaluating information** by methods appropriate to major area	Yes
9. **Writing correctly and clearly** in forms and styles appropriate for my major area within MEJO	Yes
10. Ability to **critically evaluate my own work** and that of others for **accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammar**	No
11. Application of **basic numerical and statistical concepts**	No
12. Application of **tools and technologies appropriate for major** area	Yes

We used quantitative (ratings) feedback and qualitative (comments) feedback from the above components to make inferences of student success in 4 of the 5 key ACEJMC values and competencies included in the annual university assessment reporting (#1 Law excluded, see below):

- #7 Critical thinking
    - Coverage of topic
    - Sources and evidence used
    - Strategic Communication components
- #8 Conducting research and evaluating information
    - Coverage of topic
    - Sources and evidence used
- #9 Writing correctly and clearly
    - Organization of information
    - Writing mechanics
- #12 Application of tools and technologies appropriate for major
    - Strategic Communication
    - Design

Because ACEJMC value #1 regarding freedom of the press was not determined to be the most appropriate measure of evaluation for this particular exercise, which is focused on judgments of quality by high-ranking members of the journalism and strategic communication professions, we replaced this value with an inference to ACEJMC competency #5 relating to the use and presentation of information,

which would be relevant to capstone projects. Thus, in addition to the four competencies evaluated above, the following competency was also evaluated via this capstone assessment:

- #5 Concepts and theories in use and presentation of images and information
  - Coverage of topic
  - Design (visual/design components)

The following table shows the quantitative results of the scoring by industry professionals of a random sampling of residential and online masters students' final professional thesis projects, compared with a random sampling of undergraduate senior student work from capstone courses.

Overall impressions, quality of writing, evidence, organization, visuals, and other elements were rated by professionals on the following 1-5 scale (midpoint = 3):

5 = Seasoned professional (as in 5 years in the job)
4 = Early career (first or second year in the job)
3 = Intern (student approaching their senior year)
2 = Student (beginning to learn the ropes)
1 = Does not meet the minimum rating of student

For the very last question of the assessment, professionals were asked to rate "if this project were included in a portfolio, would you consider interviewing the author for an open position." This final item was rated with 4 items scored as a 1-5 scale, with "3" being missing (midpoint = 3):

5 = Definitely yes
4 = Probably yes
(3 is purposely missing)
2 = Probably not
1 = Definitely not

Overall Project Scores, Undergraduate & MA/MADC

The sample sizes are very small and so average scores should be interpreted with caution. The size of this sample also prevents additional statistical analyses of significant differences to be conducted.

Scores for Master's student projects were similar to the scores for the undergraduate students' projects. Undergraduate students received an overall impression score of 3.00 ± .72 (Intern level) and Master's students received an overall average score of 3.38 ± 1.12 (between Intern and Early Career).

Specifically, external reviewers gave their highest ratings for the writing mechanics of undergraduate capstone projects (3.42 ± 1.02, between Intern and Early Career) and for writing mechanics for MA student projects (4.00 ± 1.00, Early Career).

The undergraduate work scored lowest on quality of sources and/or evidence.
Regarding overall ACEJMC competencies, all average scores for undergraduates were at the Intern level with the highest average scores being for:

- #5 Concepts and theories in use and presentation of images and information
- #12 Application of tools and technologies appropriate for major.

For MA projects, the lowest scores were on organization of information. Yet their highest composite average score per ACEJMC competency was for #9 Writing correctly and clearly.

On balance, the external reviewers were mixed on whether they would interview the student based on the assessed work (3.38 ± 1.10 for undergraduates and 3.62 ± 1.12 for MA students).

Question (on 1-5 scale)	Capstone Projects N = 24		All Masters Projects N = 13	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Please rate your **overall impression** of the student's work.	3.00	.72	3.38	1.12
#5 Concepts and theories in use and presentation of images and information				
Rate the project's **coverage of topic**.	3.17	.96	3.77	1.23
Video / design component only: Rate the project's **use of visuals**	3.13	.83	3.78	1.20
Average across area	**3.38**	**.69**	**3.51**	**1.22**
#7 Critical thinking				
Rate the project's **coverage of topic**.	3.17	.96	3.77	1.23
Rate the project's **sources and/or evidence**.	2.96	.95	3.54	1.20
Strategic Communication only: Rate the project's **thoroughness and administrative detail**.	3.29	.83	N/A	N/A
Average across area	**3.07**	**.78**	**3.65**	**1.13**
#8 Conducting research and evaluating information				
Rate the project's **coverage of topic**.	3.17	.96	3.77	1.23
Rate the project's **sources and/or evidence**.	2.96	.95	3.54	1.20
Average across area	**3.06**	**.83**	**3.65**	**1.13**
#9 Writing clearly and correctly				
Rate the project's **organization of information**.	2.92	.83	3.23	1.30

Rate the project's **writing mechanics**.	3.42	1.02	4.00	1.00
Average across area	**3.17**	**.73**	**3.78**	**.90**
#12 Application of tools and technologies				
Strategic Communication only: Rate the project's **thoroughness and administrative detail**.	3.29	.83	N/A	N/A
Video / design component only: Rate the project's **use of visuals**	3.13	.83	3.78	1.20
Average across area	**3.38**	**.64**	**N/A**	**N/A**
If this project were included in a portfolio, would you consider interviewing the author for an open position?	3.38	1.10	3.62	1.12

Select Comments from Reviewers Across All Projects

Industry professionals were invited at the end of the assessment form to write comments about the project they just rated. Below are key comments offered by the industry professionals that capture the general themes we noted across all comments from the assessments of both the undergraduate capstone and master's programs. Feedback regarding each learning outcome must be inferred from the topic indicated in each comment.

In summary, areas for improvement include the gathering, analysis, and explanation of data and the use of concise and engaging writing. Strengths include the technical quality of writing and the use of various story elements, including visuals and characters.

Comments

"… A little more data would go a long way to communicate the size and scale of the challenge and create a greater sense of urgency."

"… A little cluttered and clunky. But that's not the point. For what it is, I think the design works…it is intuitive and easy to follow which is important in this context for this audience."

"The videos were beautifully and professionally produced. The first-person stories…were compelling. The interviews…were too long and needed editing in order to better tell their stories."

"Characters are effectively introduced and woven into the narrative … uses enticing leads effectively in tracking the story from segment to segment… makes a technical topic interesting to the layman reader."

"…thorough and professional. I don't agree with every recommendation, but I can see the thought process and there's good detail in the plan."

"The sources were largely internal. The piece could benefit from some outsiders with different opinions."

"…writing is technically adequate but not at all interesting. A significant lack of creativity for what should be a creative project."

REPORT OF 2019 INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS EVALUATION
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
DIRECT MEASURE

SUMMER 2019 UNDERGRADUATE CAPSTONE AND PROFESSIONAL MASTERS ASSESSMENT OF FINAL PROJECTS BY INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

Evaluating professional deliverables by graduating seniors versus MA/MADC students

In 2017, the assessment team reviewed past assessment activities for effectiveness in evaluating student learning outcomes based on the nature of the evaluations, the evaluators, and the existing data quality. Based on this analysis, the team decided to alter the assessment plan to improve both data quality and effectiveness by changing the administration and content of the undergraduate knowledge pretest/posttest assessment and the senior student experience survey and by launching an assessment of senior student work by high-ranking professionals in the journalism and strategic communication industries to provide another direct measure of student learning outcomes.

This report describes the results of the second launch of this assessment of senior student work by industry professionals. To provide a comparison point relevant to workplace readiness, senior-level capstone projects were compared with projects from the school's master's level students engaged in professional projects. We felt this comparison would be much more meaningful and useful for assessing our senior students' accomplishments and would also be more meaningful time spent by our industry professional volunteers (compared to asking these professionals to evaluate beginning student work, which does not provide a comparison point for workplace readiness or desired/aspirational levels of student learning).

In July 2019, we selected undergraduate student capstone projects and MA theses at random from the 2018-2019 academic year and submitted them for review by strategic communication and journalism professionals. The review panel consisted of five journalism and four strategic communication professionals from the MEJO Board of Advisors, Foundation Board, or MJAA.

Reviewers evaluated the deliverable from senior undergraduate capstone courses, online MADC (Master of Arts in Digital Communication) thesis projects from MADC students graduating in Fall 2018, and the thesis projects of professional-track residential MA students who graduated in Spring 2019.

We asked these professionals to look at several components of our students' work, including:
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5. Concepts and theories in the use and **presentation of images** and information	Yes
6. Professional **ethical principles** and work in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity	No
7. **Thinking critically,** creatively and independently	Yes
8. **Conducting research and evaluating information** by methods appropriate to major area	Yes
9. **Writing correctly and clearly** in forms and styles appropriate for my major area within MEJO	Yes
10. Ability to **critically evaluate my own work** and that of others for **accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammar**	No
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    - o Coverage of topic
    - o Sources and evidence used
    - o Strategic Communication components
- #8 Conducting research and evaluating information
    - o Coverage of topic
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Because ACEJMC value #1 regarding freedom of the press was not determined to be the most appropriate measure of evaluation for this particular exercise, which is focused on judgments of quality by high-ranking members of the journalism and strategic communication professions, we replaced this value with an inference to ACEJMC competency #5 relating to the use and presentation of information,

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- #5 Concepts and theories in use and presentation of images and information
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The following table shows the quantitative results of the scoring by industry professionals of a random sampling of residential and online masters students' final professional thesis projects, compared with a random sampling of undergraduate senior student work from capstone courses.

Overall impressions, quality of writing, evidence, organization, visuals, and other elements were rated by professionals on the following 1-5 scale (midpoint = 3):
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For the very last question of the assessment, professionals were asked to rate "if this project were included in a portfolio, would you consider interviewing the author for an open position." This final item was rated with 4 items scored as a 1-5 scale, with "3" being missing (midpoint = 3):
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Overall Project Scores, Undergraduate & MA/MADC

The sample sizes are very small and so average scores should be interpreted with caution. The size of this sample also prevents additional statistical analyses of significant differences to be conducted.

Scores for Master's student projects were similar to the scores for the undergraduate students' projects. Undergraduate students received an overall average score of 3.06 ± 1.00 (Intern level) and Master's students received an overall average score of 3.28 ± .99 (Intern level).

The undergraduate work scored lowest on quality of sources and/or evidence, which is consistent with the previous year's lowest average score.

Regarding overall ACEJMC competencies, all average scores for undergraduates were at the Intern level with the highest average scores being for:
- #9 Writing correctly and clearly
- #7 Thinking critically, creatively, and independently.

For MA projects, the lowest scores were on overall impression of their work. Their highest composite average score per ACEJMC competency was for #7 Thinking critically, creatively, and independently.

On balance, the external reviewers were mixed on whether they would interview the student based on the assessed work (3.41 ± 1.38 for undergraduates and 3.76 ± 1.30 for MA students).

Question (on 1-5 scale)	Capstone Projects N = 26		All Masters Projects N = 18	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Please rate your **overall impression** of the student's work.	3.06	1.00	3.28	.99
#5 Concepts and theories in use and presentation of images and information				
Rate the project's **coverage of topic**.	3.34	.97	3.76	.88
Video / design component only: Rate the project's **use of visuals**	3.00	1.28	3.50	.67
Average across area	**3.19**	**1.07**	**3.67**	**.62**
#7 Critical thinking				
Rate the project's **coverage of topic**.	3.34	.97	3.76	.88
Rate the project's **sources and/or evidence**.	2.91	1.06	3.60	1.04
Strategic Communication only: Rate the project's **thoroughness and administrative detail**.	3.46	1.20	3.40	.52
Average across area	**3.49**	**1.16**	**3.70**	**.74**
#8 Conducting research and evaluating information				
Rate the project's **coverage of topic**.	3.34	.97	3.76	.88
Rate the project's **sources and/or evidence**.	2.91	1.06	3.60	1.04
Average across area	**3.13**	**.98**	**3.68**	**.91**
#9 Writing clearly and correctly				
Rate the project's **organization of information**.	3.31	.97	3.60	1.04
Rate the project's **writing mechanics**.	3.59	.93	3.76	.88
Average across area	**3.52**	**.90**	**3.68**	**.85**

#12 Application of tools and technologies				
Strategic Communication only: Rate the project's **thoroughness and administrative detail**.	3.46	1.20	3.40	.52
Video / design component only: Rate the project's **use of visuals**	3.00	1.28	3.50	.67
Average across area	**3.13**	**1.25**	**3.68*** (reflects the 6 students with both elements in project)	**.41**
If this project were included in a portfolio, would you consider interviewing the author for an open position?	3.41	1.38	3.76	1.30

Select Comments from Reviewers Across All Projects

Embedded within the assessment tool, industry professionals were invited to provide comments to qualify their rating each time they assigned a score to an element of the project. This provision of comments differs from the first iteration of this assessment, administered the previous year, in order to more adequately capture qualitative evaluations for each element (e.g., writing, use of sources, visuals). In that first iteration, only one opportunity for comments was provided at the end of the assessment instrument. In this current iteration, comments were specific to each element, making it easier to identify comments specific to each student learning outcome.

Below are key comments offered by the industry professionals that capture the general themes we noted across all comments from the assessments of both the undergraduate capstone and master's programs.

In summary, the top areas for improvement include analysis, attributing sources, providing more evidence vs. relying on assumptions and organization. Strengths include depth of research, strong writing (e.g. engaging, original, thoughtful, articulate) and strong production (e.g. video editing, video composition, webpage design).

Overall Comments

"… I think admirably well researched and excellently reasoned path to initial success of such an undertaking."

"Well written and constructive, good use of sound, breadth of research and reporting show through, highly engaging."

"… Overall impression: I felt as if I were reading someone's notes. The reporter clearly made an effort to contact sources and gather data, but the stories in general lacked sharp focus, nut graphs and sweep."

"This student does not demonstrate basic journalism skills. He or she shows no mastery of AP style, leads, nut graphs, sourcing, story organization, and quote usage. The student made a style error six words into the story."

"The analysis is at quite a high level. It actually could have benefited from less technical language and more explanation of terms and concepts. These are complex issues and a good journalist makes them digestible and clear."

Sources (#7 Critical thinking and #8 Conducting research and evaluating information)

Fourteen comments mentioned good use of sources or good variety of sources. Twelve comments indicated that more evidence was needed to support conclusions. Ten comments mentioned the lack of variety of sources or having too few sources.

"The reporter made an effort, but that effort serves to underscore a striking lack of knowledge about what to do with those sources once someone answers the telephone. I also wonder if the reporter relied too heavily on email, rather than picking up the phone."

"The sourcing is the strongest part of the story, with a broad range of voices in most stories."

"The lack of critical analysis appears directly tied to the lack of critical sourcing. The story cites one meek analyst report deep into the story and needs more accountability at the top."

Organization (#9 Writing clearly)

"Structure is the weakest element of this portfolio, along with story form. The pieces present facts almost as a research summary versus as engaging journalism."

"The organization needs work -- and there are segments that need cutting.   But there is such an abundance of good material -- with a solid construct -- that the editing process would be fairly easy."

"The story starts strong and flows nicely. With minor editing and significant cuts, it could be ready for publication within a day. The biggest missing component is an 'so what' paragraph to help readers understand why [name removed] is a story."

Writing (#9 Writing clearly)
"This reporter clearly has some writing talent, but the story was marred by style errors and general sloppiness."

"Straightforward, minimal jargon, clear, concise. This is a plan that could be out to use right away."

"The voice and storytelling are impressive and could sharpen with few edits."

Strategic Communication Elements (#7 Critical thinking and #12 Application of tools and technologies)

Five comments in this section mentioned that the student did not include a budget plan.

Other comments include:

"Excellent. Target audience identified. Action plan thought out and clearly articulated."

"High score for thoroughness and detail...methodology lacks wider sample of population demos.*"*

Design (#5 Use and presentation of images and information and #12 Application of tools and technologies)

"The graphics are helpful, but could have been better incorporated into the story. They are pretty basic, and other data elements would have been more helpful to tell the local story in new ways."

"This is the strongest component of the entire project. Nice design. Good vertical layout keeps the reader/viewer engaged."

"This piece had very, very strong visuals and audio. It contained very, very strong video framing and composition."

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STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

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This report describes the results of the third launch of this assessment of senior student work by industry professionals. To provide a comparison point relevant to workplace readiness, senior-level capstone projects were compared with projects from the school's master's level students engaged in professional projects. We felt this comparison would be much more meaningful and useful for assessing our senior students' accomplishments and would also be more meaningful time spent by our industry professional volunteers (compared to asking these professionals to evaluate beginning student work, which does not provide a comparison point for workplace readiness or desired/aspirational levels of student learning).

In June 2020, we selected undergraduate student capstone projects and MA theses at random from the 2019-2020 academic year and submitted them for review by strategic communication and journalism professionals. The scope of the review was modified due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the 2020 reviewers consisted of two journalism and two strategic communication professionals from the MEJO Board of Advisors, Foundation Board, or MJAA.

Reviewers evaluated the deliverable from senior undergraduate capstone courses, online MADC (Master of Arts in Digital Communication) thesis projects from MADC students graduating in Fall 2019, and the thesis projects of professional-track residential MA students who graduated in Spring 2020.

We asked these professionals to look at several components of our students' work, including:
- Coverage of topic
- Sources and evidence used
- Organization of information
- Writing mechanics
- Strategic Communication (when there is a strategic communication component to the project)

- Design (when there is a visual/ design component to the project)

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7. **Thinking critically,** creatively and independently	Yes
8. **Conducting research and evaluating information** by methods appropriate to major area	Yes
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The sample sizes are very small and so average scores should be interpreted with caution. The size of this sample also prevents additional statistical analyses of significant differences to be conducted.

Scores for Master's student projects (including both MA and MADC) were similar to the scores for the undergraduate students' projects. Undergraduate students received an overall average score of 3.69 ± .90 (between Intern and Early Career level) and Master's students received an overall average score of 3.60 ± 1.30. These are both higher scores this year, compared with last year's scores of 3.06 ± 1.00 (Intern level) for undergraduates and 3.28 ± .99 (Intern level) for Master's students.

The undergraduate work scored lowest on quality of sources and/or evidence, which is consistent with the previous two years. Their highest scores were on organization of information. Also noteworthy, undergraduates' average score on the use of visuals increased from 3.0 last year to 3.75 this year.

All average composite scores for each evaluated ACEJMC competency were above Intern level for both undergraduates and Master's students. For undergraduates, the average composite score for #9 Writing correctly and clearly was at the Early Career level.

Master's students' lowest scores were on their use of sources and evidence. Their highest scores were on the organization of information.

On balance, the external reviewers were somewhat mixed, leaning toward probably yes, on whether they would interview the student based on the assessed work (4.00 ± 1.04 for undergraduates and 3.50 ± 1.73 for MA/MADC students).

Question (on 1-5 scale)	Capstone Projects N = 12		All Masters Projects N = 4	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Please rate your **overall impression** of the student's work.	3.58	1.00	3.50	1.29
#5 Concepts and theories in use and presentation of images and information				
Rate the project's **coverage of topic**.	3.50	1.09	3.75	.96
Video / design component only: Rate the project's **use of visuals**	3.75	.89	3.50	.71
Average across area	**3.58**	**.90**	**3.75**	**.96**
#7 Critical thinking				
Rate the project's **coverage of topic**.	3.50	1.09	3.75	.96
Rate the project's **sources and/or evidence**.	2.92	1.17	3.25	1.50
Strategic Communication only: Rate the project's **thoroughness and administrative detail**.	3.83	1.17	3.50	.71
Average across area	**3.28**	**1.05**	**3.54**	**1.18**
#8 Conducting research and evaluating information				
Rate the project's **coverage of topic**.	3.50	1.09	3.75	.96
Rate the project's **sources and/or evidence**.	2.92	1.17	3.25	1.50
Average across area	**3.21**	**1.03**	**3.50**	**1.22**
#9 Writing clearly and correctly				
Rate the project's **organization of information**.	4.17	1.03	4.00	1.41

Rate the project's **writing mechanics**.	4.09	.94	3.75	1.50
Average across area	**4.08**	**.95**	**3.88**	**1.44**
#12 Application of tools and technologies				
Strategic Communication only: Rate the project's **thoroughness and administrative detail**.	3.83	1.17	3.50	.71
Video / design component only: Rate the project's **use of visuals**	3.75	.89	3.50	.71
Average across area	**3.81**	**.96**	**3.50**	**.71**
If this project were included in a portfolio, would you consider interviewing the author for an open position?	4.00	1.04	3.50	1.73

Select Comments from Reviewers Across All Projects

Embedded within the assessment tool, industry professionals were invited to provide comments to qualify their rating each time they assigned a score to an element of the project. This provision of comments differs from the first iteration of this assessment, administered the previous year, in order to more adequately capture qualitative evaluations for each element (e.g., writing, use of sources, visuals). In that first iteration, only one opportunity for comments was provided at the end of the assessment instrument. In this current iteration, comments were specific to each element, making it easier to identify comments specific to each student learning outcome.

Below are key comments offered by the industry professionals that capture the general themes we noted across all comments from the assessments of both the undergraduate capstone and master's programs.

In summary, the top areas for improvement include analysis, attributing sources, providing more evidence vs. relying on assumptions and organization. Strengths include depth of research, strong writing (e.g. engaging, original, thoughtful, articulate) and strong production (e.g. video editing, video composition, webpage design).

Overall Comments
Journalism
- This is, hands down, the best work I've ever heard, seen, read coming from UNC Chapel Hill's Hussman Media School. Ever. It is complete, compelling, riveting, important, told in a way that kept me glued to the podcast afraid to turn away.
- The lede paragraphs and set-up story is wonderful and compelling and pulls the reader into the broader, wider narrative through the eyes and experiences of pastor whose life was changed because of this church.

- The style of writing, the interactions and characters of the interview subjects and the tone of the story were superb. If this were a "feature" assignment at a major newspaper I'm not sure it could have been done much better. If this was a business story it could have used more data or an overall view that showed how small businesses such as hair salons are struggling overall. But as a straight feature this was terrific.
- The story is well composed and read smoothly. It just needed a little more polish and better sourcing.
- The organization, lack of a clear so-what element near the top, as well as the punctuation errors led me to put this writing sample in the category of intern.
- The camera work was stellar. The editing was strong and kept the piece moving throughout.
- These budding writers, reporters, producers and photographs be told again and again there can be no shortcuts. They must seek other voices, be skeptical of sources, assertions and story lines that all too easily fit a preconceived narrative.

Strategic Communication

- This could have been a seasoned pro except that the methodology and much of the strategy overlooks non-collegiate millennials.
- I believe a PR plan structured on this framework stands a very good chance of achieving the well-stated goals of the project. Best of all there's plenty of room for the "on-the-fly" adjustments that are always necessary.
- I was impressed and thrilled with both the [PR project] work not because either one was flawless – but because both projects showed great conceptual thinking, smart creative strategies and thoughtful, practical tactics in real-life problem-solving. In my view THIS is the key to MEJO training in strategic communication.
- Consider assisting in organizing a non-student/beyond university survey population database so folks can get more real world experience and results.
- Encourage and facilitate research that includes audience respondents beyond the campus population for projects that naturally involve the broader target. Stress that any figures/statistics/definitions included need source cited.

Coverage of Topic (#5 Use and presentation of images and information, #7 Critical thinking, and #8 Conducting research and evaluating information)

Journalism

- Great sensitivity and understanding of the topic. Terrific interviews and perspectives to give the reader the sense that they know these people, that these people matter and this subject matters.
- … lacking more perspective and depth. … My editor at a major professional journalism company would have insisted on more.
- Well researched and thoroughly reported. Maybe too thoroughly...very long
- It covered the major components of the story solidly, but only in a limited capacity. For a short story, this was fine. It needed to emphasize the local angle higher up in the story -- started to read like a national piece only to find the local angle tucked in the bottom.

Strategic Communication

- Overall, assuming the research is valid, coverage is well-considered well reported and well translated into action plans
- The coverage was excellent. I can only think of a few things that might have been further addressed, (and perhaps only in a Phase II of this plan). First some thought on integration of this "outside" millennial group among the older … clique.
- Again, "college student" and "millennial" terminology was used interchangeably, and any behavioral distinctions between the two are not captured.

Sources (#7 Critical thinking and #8 Conducting research and evaluating information)

Journalism

- Several comments on the journalism pieces about relying on too few human sources, such as this: "This is the weakest part of this project. There is one source. One perspective. And the only evidence is from his mouth. Now, there can be powerful and meaningful pieces done through the eyes of one person. But telling this story alone without getting other sources or digging up other evidence leaves the viewer wanting more."
- A major problem with this piece is relying on The NY times article for data points and broad assumptions about "mainstream" denominations listed in the article that are simply not true. A simple query or search for other sources or evidence or merely checking the website of those denominations would have shown that.
- I don't see any attribution of source or evidence other than uncited and unproven presumption of effective strategies for I-don't-know-what.
- The voices of multiple people -- and one expert -- were the strongest part of the story. Given the constraints of reporting these days, it's more difficult to reach ordinary people. But moving the conversation with sources beyond the basics and bringing in a broader cultural element -- possibly an expert or two -- would have made this story more definitive instead of a collection of voices.

Strategic Communication

- Several comments on the strategic communication pieces about insufficient sample size or relying too much on college students, such as this: "Millennial populations are far larger than simply UNC college students and that, perhaps insular, psychographic, and I suggest expanding the research respondent base to include community college, non-college blue collar millennials, maybe others in the age demographic with disposable incomes."
- Primary research based on personal social media accounts. An admirable amount of secondary sources.

Organization (#9 Writing clearly)

Journalism

- Great paragraphs describing personal experiences to "get into" the wider story. Nice organization of the narrative telling how this church serves its community and interacts with the wider world.
- This was one of the strongest parts of the project. Nice visuals interspersed among soundbites from the interview. The video and editing didn't get in the way or become too "showy." Good focus on his face and thoughtful emotion.
- An important topic told in a terrific, compelling way. My only thought would be to hold off on the ending of the reveal of [the] murderer more towards the end. Part four talking about controversy over genealogy and use of DNA to solve crimes started to drag after we learn [the] murder has been solved.
- I don't know what I'm reading or why. And that continues in each as it lacks a cohesive point on why the series was organized in this fashion and why the information is relevant to me as a reader.

Writing (#9 Writing clearly)

Journalism

- Writing is clear, concise, simple yet powerful. It tells an important and compelling story in a way that makes the reader want to keep engaged until the end.
- Needs work but a good start. Nothing breakthrough, but admirable work.

- The writing is fine. But it's what the author decided to write and how the author executed it that had problems. The material in the story is rich in detail, so the author missed an opportunity to write it more cinematically.
- Well written. Simple yet engaging. No real run-on sentences. Strong writing was one of the best parts of this piece.

Strategic Communication
- The writing element is simply the plan itself and with the exception of some minor grammatical and punctuation edits, the report was coherent, organized and well written.
- The example digital posts are all technically written well enough, I guess.
- The writing elements of the suggested creative were very good and about what I'd expect.

Strategic Communication Elements (#7 Critical thinking and #12 Application of tools and technologies)
- I simply do not see much missing. Very thorough and detailed to the extent possible in a Phase I proposal.
- Methodology details need to be disclosed, or more encompassing of full target audience.
- This team can write well. However, no granular details of the research methodology were provided (survey qs, how survey administered, demo/qualifying info on who were the interviewees/focus group participants), and the recommendations are so campus oriented, that it is not clear whether research included non-student Millennials.
- Great strategic communications elements and empirical solutions...now how do they relate to any real-life problem?
- Well considered and the thought was very good. I do not think the budget was even close to realistic, sadly, students seemingly have little idea what such a project would actually cost. You gonna get Pepsi and/or other (currently suffering) local or regional businesses on board with this idea for spending their money?...possible...maybe...but people stand at their door asking every day, and they must evaluate cost/benefit...not cheap or easy persuasion.

Design (#5 Use and presentation of images and information and #12 Application of tools and technologies)

- Very strong, very powerful, very compelling video and editing
- The visual elements were OK, nothing blockbuster.
- Room for improvement, but well-conceived. I'm not "WOWED" but not disappointed either. Pretty fair start.
- The visuals were good -- lots of good B roll to overlay audio. The visuals really helped carry it -- the detailed shots from the water and the subject gave me a good sense of him and his work in the visual sense. The subtitles were helpful and necessary. The captions (introducing him and telling more about the project) were adequate but not consistently in the same place, so it made it harder to follow.
- The graphics and layout of the visual elements (the proposed flyer, app and social media) are very good. I do believe with some effort there exists opportunity to make these visual elements and associated copy real creative "stunners." We're not quite there yet on that. Very serviceable visual elements nevertheless. Good, not great yet.