

Quadrennial Review

The following topics are addressed to place the practices and activities of the Meek School in perspective:

- **“The Teaching Hospital Model”**
- **The Carnegie/Knight Initiative**
- **The roots of journalism education**
- **Journalism as an activity of intellectual depth**
- **Accreditation**
- **Objectives for the next four years**

I was appointed Dean of the Meek School on July 1, 2009 with the understanding that the faculty of the Meek School of Journalism and New Media intended to be one of the nation’s best. I was coming from one of 12 schools in the Carnegie-Knight Initiative. From conversations with university administrators, faculty, students and alumni, I concluded that the Meek School wanted to provide students with learning experiences to help them develop into professionals who excel in a global economy. In other words, the school was created to prepare students for careers in media, integrated marketing communications, business and countless other fields. To provide such an education, five initiatives seemed appropriate:

- Recruit a diverse and high-achieving student body;
- Attract a diverse faculty who are accomplished professionals possessing intellectual depth and breadth;
- Provide a capstone learning experience that integrates every aspect of the curriculum, from depth reporting to documentary work to integrated marketing communications campaigns;
- Offer international learning experiences; and
- Partner with the College of Liberal Arts and other schools at Ole Miss as well as universities worldwide.

Based on the vision that was communicated to me during the interview process, I set the following objectives for the school, most of which I knew could not be met in four years. Among these:

- Hiring of quality faculty to complement existing faculty and bring increased rigor in the foundation courses;
- Revision of the curriculum to provide instruction on multiple platforms;
- Development of a more effective advising system;
- Involvement with various media professions at a more intense level to focus service and scholarship more on media needs;
- Approval of an undergraduate and graduate curriculum in integrated marketing communications;
- Enhancement of a national profile of the school by increasing faculty involvement in ACEJMC;
- Diversification and internationalization of the program;
- Decreasing the number of majors in the journalism program to reflect quality opportunities in media and increasing enrollment in the integrated marketing program to reflect a growing market; and
- Finding donations and other funds to supplement the state budget.

The “Teaching Hospital” Model

During the last several years, leading foundations have issued a call for a “Teaching Hospital” model of media education. The foundations, all of which make grants to journalism education and innovation, urged more universities to adopt a model that

- Blends practice with scholarship,
- Includes more top professionals in residence at universities, and
- Focuses on applied research.

“In this new digital age, we believe the ‘teaching hospital’ model offers great potential,” top representatives (of the Knight Foundation, McCormack Foundation, Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation, Scripps-Howard Foundation, Brett Family Foundation and Wyncotte Foundation) wrote in a letter to educators.

The “Teaching Hospital” model was described in the 2011 “Carnegie Knight Initiative for the Future of Journalism Education,” and officials of the signing foundations indicated they would support efforts by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications to modernize standards (including the integration of technology and innovation into curricula) and would not support institutions that were unwilling to change.

“Simply put, universities must become forceful partners in revitalizing an industry at the very core of democracy,” it said. “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.”

The Carnegie-Knight Initiative

The following describes the Carnegie-Knight Initiative and is on the program’s website <<http://carnegie.org/programs/past-commissions-councils-and-task-forces/future-of-journalism-education>>:

Under President Vartan Gregorian's leadership, Carnegie Corporation of New York has made journalism education a key priority. In 2003, the Corporation began a dialogue with deans of several of the United States’ most prestigious journalism schools to determine how major research universities could improve the journalism curriculum. The goal was to challenge students intellectually and prepare them for careers in the news industry at this pivotal time of change in the field....

Vartan Gregorian created a partnership with Hodding Carter, then president of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, a leading philanthropy focused on excellence in journalism, and enlisted the aid of the consulting firm McKinsey & Co. who, on a pro bono basis, interviewed 40 news industry leaders, including news executives, editors, and correspondents, about their views on journalism education. These conversations with deans and journalism professionals became the intellectual foundation for the Carnegie-Knight Initiative on the Future of Journalism Education, launched in 2005.

Carnegie Corporation’s relationship with the Knight Foundation, under the leadership of current president Alberto Ibarguen, is an equal partnership, with both

foundations supporting all the intellectual and scholarly facets of the Initiative, which focuses on reform and innovation.

The three components of the Initiative are:

Curriculum Enrichment

A key feature of the Initiative is curriculum enrichment, a process aimed at offering students a deep and multi-layered exploration of such complex subjects as history, politics, classics and philosophy to undergird their journalistic skills while raising the profile of journalism education within the university.

News 21

The News 21 incubators are national reporting projects organized on an annual basis and overseen by campus-based professors for distribution through traditional and innovative media <<http://news21.com>>

The Carnegie-Knight Task Force

The Carnegie-Knight Task Force provides the journalism deans with an opportunity to speak out on issues affecting journalism education and the field of journalism.

I agree, of course, with much of what this initiative is doing. How could I not agree? I was dean of a member program, and when I was hired at Ole Miss in 2009, I understood that I was to lead the Meek School in a manner similar to that of my previous tenure.

However, I need to observe that I disagree with an emphasis that seems to be so strongly on digital journalism. Secondly, the business side of journalism is not addressed as strongly as it should be. Moreover, the "Teaching Hospital" model of media education does not accurately describe what a good journalism and integrated marketing communication school must provide. Thus, the Carnegie-Knight Initiative has some of the same weaknesses that caused many journalism programs to create separate entities for broadcast journalism because they were so focused on medium rather than function. Indeed, Integrated Marketing Communication is not discussed in much depth in the Carnegie-Knight Initiative. (It also is not mentioned in the name of the Meek School.) Finally, the approach of Carnegie-Knight is much too aggressive. The call for

the “Teaching Hospital” model declared that journalism programs are behind the times. Such a declaration indicates that members of the Carnegie-Knight Initiative do not understand so much of the good work that is being done on university campuses in media education. Such lack of understanding causes many faculties to react rather than adapt. Thus, I think the initiative should have attempted to bring about incremental change, not a virtual revolution, and the term “teaching hospital” probably should not have been used.

The Carnegie-Knight position seems to focus on the fact that journalism at the graduate level has been defined too narrowly and should be student and industry-oriented. Quality journalism education is not for faculty or administrators. It is for students and should provide media industries with outstanding graduates. From this point of view, administrators and faculty exist to provide students with the best possible education and society with quality employees and citizens while providing an exceptional education. Indeed, the assumption is that universities have a fiduciary relationship with parents and students. Parents have been paying taxes and tuition to have the best education for their children. Thus, when they are hired, faculty and administrators essentially agree to work to provide a quality, learning environment.

Unfortunately, unless faculty members have significant, recent professional experience, they will not be prepared to teach at more than a basic level. Because most of our fundamental courses are courses that deal with media performance, we needed more faculty members to teach the introductory (or foundation) courses at a more intense level. Seldom do such top professionals agree to pursue a Ph.D. Fortunately, the Meek School had a number of faculty with the Ph.D. on July 1, 2009 when the school was founded. Thus, the task of the school was to find faculty to teach the foundation courses in a manner that would produce more qualified graduates.

Carnegie-Knight programs include a pragmatic mix of faculty with doctorates and faculty with expertise in teaching. On such quality faculties, each person must respect herself or himself enough to welcome the strengths that the other faculty members provide. Thus, at the University of California, Berkeley Graduate School, there is one Ph.D. and one J.D.; the remaining faculty have either a master's or bachelor's degree. Douglas Troutman at Medill sent me a message via e-mail with this list for faculty at that school:

- Tenured Professors with Ph.D. – 10
- Tenured Professors with Master's or Bachelor's – 3
- Tenured Associate Professors with Ph.D. – 2
- Tenured Associate Professors with Master's or Bachelor's – 2
- Tenure Track Assistant Professors with Ph.D. – 5
- Tenure Track Assistant Professors with Master's or Bachelor's – 1
- Clinical Professors with Ph.D. -1
- Clinical Professors with Master's or Bachelor's – 3
- Clinical Associate Professors with Master's or Bachelor's – 13
- Clinical Assistant Professors with Master's or Bachelor's – 18

Susan Radner, assistant to former Dean Nick Lemann at the Columbia University School of Journalism, wrote this:

Columbia Journalism School has 40 full-time faculty members (and, at any given semester, around 70 adjunct instructors). Twenty members of the full-time faculty are tenured, and four more are on the tenure track.

All 24 tenured/tenure track faculty have bachelor's degrees; 19 also have master's degrees (including two law degrees); and six have Ph.D.'s (including one honorary). The 16 non-tenure track full-time instructors are Professors of Professional Practice or Visiting Professors. Generally, across all academic ranks, a B.A. or B.S. is the minimum requirement for instructors at our school.

Marianne Barrett, Senior Associate Dean and Louise Solheim Professor at the Walter Cronkie School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University, wrote the following:

... we have three endowed chairs without the Ph.D. One has a J.D., one an M.A. and one a B.A. All of our other tenured/tenure track faculty have a Ph.D.

Journalism/communication education is not the only field in which professional experience is vital. Other similar programs on most campuses include music, art, dance and architecture.

In summary, while the Carnegie-Knight proposal is not innovative, it does stimulate discussion (if not reaction), but it may be too prescriptive. The faculty of each journalism/communication program must define itself and develop a strategic plan that will work. Each faculty has a right to define itself wrongly if it wishes. If it does not define itself appropriately that faculty will not be viable. However, the definition of faculty must not be imposed from the outside.

Roots of Journalism Education

It has been observed that the historic roots of media education are in rhetoric, one of the original liberal arts as defined by the ancient Greeks, a field of study about developing skills and intellectual understanding in written and spoken language on public issues.

The early universities taught rhetoric. However, over time some faculties wanted to be known as literature departments. That is how we have arrived at Departments of English Literature, German Literature or French Literature. Those who continued to teach rhetoric basically were teaching speech. They changed the name to Speech and then to Communication Studies. The departments and schools that predominantly teach what used to be called rhetoric are now called journalism or integrated marketing communications (or the equivalents).

Within the broad context of rhetoric, instruction of students for media careers has broadened in perspective to include multiple platform instruction. With the changes that have come with

media on multiple platforms, companies have experienced financial challenges. As a result, some have suggested that universities (particularly schools of journalism) may need to enlarge their mission to include providing information and news because corporate media do not seem to have the resources to provide the information needed for citizens to make optimum decisions. Therefore, many believe more journalism will come from foundations and universities. In other words, not only will universities provide knowledge, methodologies and critical thinking, but they also will probably be sources for news and in-depth background information. Thus, scholarship increasingly may be providing in-depth understanding to residents in addition to guidance for media industries.

No matter what the future holds, effective teaching, quality service to the media and scholarly productivity are essential for any program of excellence. Chancellor Harvey Perlman of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln often said that research universities distinguish themselves with scholarship that defines teaching and service. In other words, an important role for faculty research (in addition to creating knowledge) is to provide evidence for each person's expertise in the subject areas he or she teaches and in the service he or she does. Thus, if a faculty person is a reporting teacher, his or her scholarship ought to demonstrate that he or she knows how to do reporting, for example.

The Land Grant model is the ideal in a media school. As long as the tenure system exists, every professor of media professions should be a tenure track professor who practices. Journalism and integrated marketing communication are not ivory tower topics. They have to do with thoughtful, intellectual depth of practice at the highest level.

John Dewey explained this kind of learning with great detail in his writing during the last century when he emphasized learning by doing. Indeed, if taken to the conclusion of the logic of its

“Teaching Hospital” model, the Carnegie-Knight initiative would oppose the distinction between professors of practice (“clinical” professors and tenure track “real” professors). Tenure track professors of media would be professors of practice.

Journalism as an Activity of Intellectual Depth

Thus, the Carnegie-Knight Initiative attempted to correct what member schools see as a fundamental error in journalism education, the undervaluing of quality journalism. Instead the Carnegie-Knight Initiative calls excellent journalism an intellectual activity of the highest quality. Some of the undervaluing that is occurring in many journalism schools may be because the founding fathers of journalism education were deeply impressed with the social sciences.

My conviction is that journalism/communications education should be identified not only with the social sciences but also with the humanities. However, in journalism/communications education much of the emphasis has been on empirical research, often with a modicum of theory and sometimes with very imprecise statistical testing. Malcolm MacLean, a former director of the School of Journalism at the University of Iowa and one of the first persons to be awarded a Ph.D. in Mass Communications (University of Wisconsin), worked with Bruce Westley to create the Westley MacLean Model of Communication. He insisted that all Ph.D. candidates at the University of Iowa do research that builds theory, not merely tests a particular case. He was appalled by the lack of theory in communications research. He took a pragmatic view of theory. He saw theory as a way to solve problems in everyday life, and he felt that much of communications research did not do that. He considered most empirical research in communications to be pedestrian.

James Carey, former dean of the College of Media at the University of Illinois, was much more careful in his critiques. Although he found much of the research in journalism education to be

lacking in quality theory, he tried to assert his criticism more gently. He accepted empirical research for tenure and promotion, but his emphasis was on research that was more akin to the research in social psychology or anthropology, and he hired faculty who had a similar theoretical foundation.

The following brief comments are taken from the first chapter of *Communication as Culture* by Carey and from *James Carey: A Critical Reader*. As Dean at the University of Illinois, Carey did not focus on fund raising and overseeing the operation of the College of Communications. Instead, he concentrated on redefining the field of journalism/communication education. Much of what he asserted is similar to the writing of Malcolm MacLean. Both built their fundamental world and life views on the basic tenets of Dewey. For additional perspective you might do a Google search for *Malcolm MacLean, Jr.: Ahead of His Time and Ahead of Our Time* by Will Norton, Jr.

In his chapter on the Chicago School in *James Carey: A Critical Reader*, Carey provided a succinct history of mass communication research. Then he commented on journalism research:

... the real intent behind the creation of both the history of mass communication research and theory of mass society, namely the attempt to contain and neutralize those intellectuals pursuing a critical theory of modern society, among whom the Frankfurt School, exiled in America, was merely the most prominent group.

If we follow Dewey, it will occur to us that problems of communication are linked to problems of community, to problems surrounding the kinds of communities we create and in which we live. For the ordinary person communication consists merely of a set of daily activities, having conversations, conveying instruction, being entertained sustaining debate and discussion, acquiring information. The felt quality of our lives is bound up with these activities and how they are carried out within communities.

For Carey redefining the study of communication had practical value. Such recasting gives us “a way to rebuild a model of and for communication of some restorative value in reshaping our common culture.”

Accreditation in Journalism and Mass Communications

Journalism and Integrated Marketing Communication have similar values and will benefit from useful exploration of the culture of communication. From discussions with Vartan Gergorian, the president of the Carnegie Foundation, I believe the future of journalism and Integrated Marketing Communication education is accurately projected in much of the vision of the Carnegie-Knight Initiative. Clearly the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, the accrediting body for journalism and mass communications, has empathy for much of the Carnegie-Knight Initiative.

These closing graphs were on the ACEJMC website as a response to the letter from the major foundations that contribute to journalism education:

Peter Bhatia, Accrediting Council president, sent the following comments to Howard Finberg, the Poynter Institute's director of training partnerships and alliances:

As you know, I am president of ACEJMC. The letter is important because it calls out much of what ACEJMC has been advocating for several years now, particularly the need for modernization of curriculum in response to the changing digital world. I give many, many schools of journalism and mass communication credit for their efforts in this work, as they realize it is essential to preparation of students for the contemporary workplace. We -- and me in particular -- have also advocated for the academy's help in experimenting and trying new digital news concepts to help industry adapt and change in the rapidly changing digital world. The teaching hospital concept is one of many that are being undertaken around the country. I applaud these efforts and I expect we will see more and more of them.

The letter gives some deserved credit (at least I am taking it that way) to ACEJMC for changing with the times. Some standard changes we will adopt (we expect) at our meeting later this month will give schools more needed curricular flexibility in preparing students. We have an excellent existing standard around facilities and budget that will serve perfectly for assessing digital transformation on campus from a technical perspective. Our assessment standard also requires gathering of data by accredited schools to test the effectiveness of what is being taught.

In short, much applause to the schools that are accomplishing exactly what the foundation letter advocates. But, yes, there is much more to do.

In brief, I view the Carnegie-Knight Initiative as a breath of fresh air in media education. It has overstated some things, and its declaration exposes several glaring weaknesses, but if the faculty continue to follow this model, with modifications, the Meek School will be a school of major significance.

Objectives for the Next Four Years

I refer the reader to the school's four annual reports to assess which objectives have nearly been met, which have not been met, etc., and if I am hired to be dean for four more years, the following would be my personal objectives:

- Continue to serve on the Hearst Journalism Awards Steering Committee; the Board of Trustees of the Freedom Forum, the Newseum; the Diversity Institute, and the executive committee of the Freedom Forum;
- Complete my term as chair of the Accrediting Committee of the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications; and
- Raise funds and provide support for the leadership team that has the following objectives:
 - Recruit a diverse and high-achieving student body;
 - Increase the number of majors in the school;
 - Attract faculty who are accomplished professionals possessing intellectual depth and breadth;
 - Provide a capstone learning experience that integrates every aspect of the curriculum in both programs;
 - Offer international learning experiences;
 - Partner with the College of Liberal Arts and other schools at Ole Miss as well as universities worldwide; and
 - Increase involvement with various media professions to focus service and scholarship more on needs of media.