

**Table 6. Authorship in *Feedback***

	All <i>Feedback</i> Articles		
	Number	Percent	
	Total	by Women	
1977	36	4	11%
1978	37	8	22%
1980	28	5	18%
1982	16*	4	25%
1984	37	9	24%
1985	41	7	17%
1986	41**	6	15%
1987	33	7	21%
1988	31	4	13%
1989	25***	3	12%
1990	49	12	24%
1991	38**	11	29%
1992	50	10	28%
1993	53	15	28%
1994	55	6	10%

- \* This total includes two issues labeled "Winter" and none for "Spring".
- \*\* No Winter issue was published, figures reflect 3 issues in 1986 and 1991.
- \*\*\* Fall 1989 issues not available for analysis.

*of Broadcasting and Electronic Media and Feedback.*

There is a general increase over time which indicates that women are taking lead authorship roles as well as being asked by male colleagues to participate in co-authorship. Of great interest is the jump in the number of women authoring book reviews. This may be evidence that the editor is actively seeking women to review books and this may provide impetus for them to later author or co-author articles.

In 1994 the percent of authors or co-authors who are women was staggeringly low which raised the question of whether women are being encouraged to contribute.

Administrators at the departmental, school and university levels should, when recruiting and hiring women faculty, provide guidance and names of faculty members who might serve as mentors in preparation for promotion and tenure, as well as developing strong educators.

The Gender Issues Division (GID) can also play a key role in the mentoring process using the newsletter mailing list, and even the BEA membership at-large list, to reach out to junior colleagues. GID members in mid level and senior positions can provide guidance in: 1) how to get articles published, 2) productions recognized through national organizations and awards, 3) get teaching evaluations and 4) develop a plan of action working toward tenure and promotion. The mentoring process should be based on the individual's institutional guidelines and requirements. The time to ask questions is now, not one month before a tenure review.

A program similar to BEA's every-member-sign-a-member, could help the GID identify more women faculty around the nation in related fields and facilitate regional and national liaisons for female colleagues with like interests. Already the Internet has many possibilities for contact, and BEA members should take advantage of it. E-mail should be useful for building a network of women supporters, academics and professionals and cultivating relationships that will help individuals develop professionally.

**Conclusions**

As in the past seven years, this report illuminates positive and negative gender trends in BEA. The positive trends are in scholarship and convention participation while the negative trends are

in invited participation. There was a significant drop in the number of women submitting to *Feedback* and an increase in the number of women submitting to the *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*. One cause is the increasing pressure to publish in refereed Journals in the broadcast field. While in the past there has been indication of a decline in repeat convention attendance by young women colleagues, it appears this is changing. In 1993 the Gender Issues Division instituted a Mentoring Workshop for untenured colleagues women and men. The Division Chair has built an annual mentoring workshop that encourages women to continue dialogue and pursue mentoring that includes recruitment, retention, promotion and tenure of junior female colleagues.

Over the years this Report has urged the members who propose panel participants and future convention program chairs to exercise additional sensitivity to the need for gender equity. Action is necessary and must begin in home departments with pressure on institutional representatives to BEA as well as on Regional Board members. If woman members in the organization participate in helping BEA colleagues find competent female participants for panels, gender inequity can be less a problem. The organization has demonstrated through the recent campaign -- every-member-sign-a-member -- that calls for action can and do make a difference. This call for action requires the GID membership to stop organizing singular gender panels and other invited participatory sessions in an effort to help make all panels more gender balanced with regard to female representation in the organization.

**Program Assessment**

**Evolving  
A Cost-Effective  
Assessment Course**

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As the assessment movement expands and solidifies across the country, electronic media programs, like those in other disciplines, are required to implement new and quantifiable standards for measuring their worth. For the radio-television unit, however, the assessment task is more challenging because of two key factors. First, the comparatively

high cost of our equipment-dependent instruction compared to "chalk-intensive" departments (such as English and history) makes us more susceptible to heightened scrutiny from upper administrators. Second, the relatively small faculty size of our units means there are fewer professors among whom the assessment task can be spread and less faculty time to

divert to assessment-related activities.

Our self-evaluative mechanisms therefore, must defend our programs' worth and effectiveness while expending a minimum of scarce staff time in assessment implementation. Nevertheless, we still must produce an assessment plan that provides: (1) a mechanism for prescriptive programmatic analysis and change; and (2) a vehicle by which our students can ascertain their own individual professional strengths and weaknesses. Assessment activities that serve only the institutional needs of the department will not spark enthusiastic student participation. On the other hand, plans that focus solely on individual student diagnostic needs will not generate the data that oversight agencies demand.

#### A Hybrid Approach

To meet this dual challenge, the author (as assessment director for an electronic media department) evolved a mechanism that blends two evaluative procedures: the *capstone course* and the *exit examination*.

According to Moore (1994), a *capstone course* in our discipline is meeting student needs when it "integrates course work, knowledge, skills, and experiential learning to enable the student to demonstrate a broad mastery of learning across the curriculum for a promise of initial employability and further learning and career advancement" (p.163). Note the emphasis here on the *student's* own professional entry and enhancement. Meanwhile, Eastman (1994) discovered in her research that an optimal *exit examination* can be "useful in providing feedback to the faculty about the weaknesses and strengths of course work, curriculum, and teaching. The results of tests can be compared over time to demonstrate improvements in curriculum" (p. 378). Note the emphasis here on *departmental* servicing and validation.

As we envisioned it for our program, the capstone course which incorporates an exit examination would be positioned to meet both student-oriented and departmentally-oriented goals. It would ensure student participation in the departmentally-assessing exit examinations by tying them to a required

culminating course. But it would also enforce attention to student needs through the timely use of examination results *within* the course as a student-servicing prescriptive tool. Given resource constraints, however, the design of this vehicle must meet both departmental and student goals in an efficient manner with the expenditure of only .25 of one faculty member's load. Thus, our Senior Seminar was born.

#### Developing the Senior Seminar

In constructing the framework for our department's capstone course --- and the exit examination contained within it --- the following developmental process ensued.

**STAGE 1.** During the initial semester of planning, faculty were asked to identify the fundamental objectives for (a) each of the department's "core" courses (required of all majors and most minors) and (b) the elective course clusters outside the core. Each professor was requested to isolate the fundamental objective of the core course or elective cluster for which she/he was responsible. For core courses or elective clusters taught by more than one individual, the staff members involved collaborated in the formulation of an objective statement. Ultimately, each student's attainments will be tested in each core area and in the elective cluster area on which the student primarily has chosen to focus. The core objectives pertain, respectively, to each of the seven classes that make up that curricularly-required body of knowledge and initially were formulated as follows:

**Survey of the Mass Media:** Students will exhibit familiarity with multiple theories of mass communication and the roles of media in society and will be able to apply these theories in analyzing media production, content and utilization within historical, social, cultural, psychological and artistic contexts.

**Audio Production:** Students will be able to perform basic audio production functions including operation of equipment, use of sound support mechanisms, and organizing of appropriate behaviors necessary to the creation of industry-acceptable packages of audio communication.

**Video Production:** Students will be able to integrate the sound, illumination, and pictorial elements of video production to create purposeful television communications via effective manipulation of equipment and technical personnel.

**History & New Technologies:** Students will be able to identify and describe the impact of important individuals, organizations, systems and technologies on the historic and projective development of electronic communication in the United States.

**Electronic Media Copywriting:** Students will be able to write effective radio and television continuity through formulation of a copy strategy, construction of a message that meets that strategy, and formatting of that message in industry-accepted script and storyboard form.

**Mass Media Criticism:** Students will be able to dissect and evaluate mass media messages of varying lengths and types by application of several different critical yardsticks (economic, aesthetic, ethical, sociological, psychological and structural) and will be capable of addressing key continuing conflict points with which media professionals must cope.

**Electronic Media Law & Regulation:** Students will be able to apply federal statutes, administrative rules and regulations as well as judicial precedents to everyday electronic media situations; discriminating between those which can be dealt with by the media practitioner and those requiring professional legal advice.

For their part, the *elective cluster objectives* came to be comprised of the following statements. Every student will choose to take an exit examination over the cluster that most closely parallels the optional coursework they pursued.

**Advanced Audio Production:** Students will be able to demonstrate appropriate selection and placement of microphones in multi-track studio recordings as well as appropriate mixing techniques for a variety of audio production tasks.

**Advanced Video Production:** Students will be able to integrate the

elements and techniques of studio and field production and post-production to create a variety of video program types that clearly communicate with the desired audience.

**Electronic Journalism:** Students will be able to produce news for radio and television by application of news gathering, news writing, reporting, interviewing, packaging and direction techniques.

**Electronic Media Performance:** Students will be able to execute and critically evaluate a variety of performance tasks including: announcing, newscasting, reporting, hosting and interviewing.

**Film Theory and Criticism:** Students will be able to describe the social, political, economic, technical and aesthetic development of the American and international film industries from their origins to the present and demonstrate how individual films and film trends reflect, reinforce, exploit and/or challenge prevailing cultural values and shifting social attitudes.

**Media Management:** Students will be able to identify and apply relevant strategic approaches to issues and challenges in a variety of decision-making situations including: facility management, programming, sales, promotion, and series creative development.

**STAGE 2.** During the second semester of Seminar development, the above objectives were submitted to the department's Industry Advisory Board --- a group of media executives who help the unit maintain its interface with the radio/television profession. Objective validation was also pursued by submitting the objectives list to the department's internship supervisors --- those media professionals who regularly oversee the program's upper level students in off-campus work situations.

**STAGE 3.** As a result of this feedback (which came via both written and group discussion formats), some minor fine-tuning of the objective statements took place.

**STAGE 4.** With programmatic outcomes thus identified, the third semester of assessment program

development was devoted to finalizing of the actual syllabus for the Senior Seminar as the vehicle through which the exit examinations would be administered and the diagnostic culmination of the student's undergraduate major or minor. Several implementing decisions were made at this point.

It was determined that the Senior Seminar would be a one semester hour course and part of the required core. It obviously must be taken in one of the student's final two semesters so as to properly function as a programmatic capstone. In order to intensify the experience, each seminar section is kept small, and to conserve faculty resources devoted to the task, the Seminar is offered in half-semester laboratory format. This means that each section of the class meets four hours per week for a total of eight weeks with four separate sections mounted every academic year. Given the four contact hours per week and amount of paperwork entailed, .25 of one professor's load for the year could sufficiently and justifiably serve the Seminar's needs.

With students experiencing a total of 32 contact hours (4 hours x 8 weeks), adequate time was available to cover what were deemed the *three* essential components of the course:

**I.** Administration of a battery of tests over each core area as well as the test covering whichever elective cluster each student chooses to take. For programmatic assessment purposes, it was determined that statistics would be compiled as to how many times the student took each core course. (Department requirements specify that a minimum grade of "C" must be earned in every class in the core.) Excessive repetition of one course by a multitude of students would raise concerns about curricular design and/or delivery.

Data are also collected to discriminate between courses taken at our institution and those brought in as transfer credit. This provides valuable comparisons between objectives attainment among students enrolled in the course at our campus and those exposed to the subject area at another university. In addition to the tests' objective and

short answer questions, open-ended items allow students to identify their self-perceived strengths and weaknesses and the strengths and weaknesses of the education received via the department's curricular and co-curricular offerings.

**II.** Subsequent feedback to students about their performance on these objectives attainment tests as well as class discussions exploring ways for them to exploit strong points and mitigate weak ones.

To facilitate this process, it was decided that the test batteries needed to be broken up into discrete sections, interspersed with in-class analysis of the results of each section. Students could thereby benchmark their own competencies with those of their peer group and become more aware of their own comparative potentials.

**III.** Refining of student strategies for entry into the job market and heightening their sensitivity to anticipated changes in the field that will impact long-term career prospects.

A two-pronged strategy was selected to serve this function. (1) Seminar students are required to prepare and refine their professional resumes in response to class/instructor discussion and suggestions. (2) Each student prepares a brief research paper that focuses on trends in the industry arena of most interest to them and speculates about the impact of those trends on their own career programming.

**STAGE 5.** The department's assessment process, and the Senior Seminar which is its prime vehicle, are very much works in progress. At this point, faculty are engaged in writing questions that will make up the exit examination test batteries. These are of both objective and open-ended varieties. It is important to note that the actual student scores on the exit tests will NOT be factored into the student's grade for the Senior Seminar. The reason for this is twofold. First, a double jeopardy mechanism is not advisable. Students have already been tested on these subject areas in their past coursework and have met minimum competency levels or they would not have attained the required minimum grade of "C" in each core

experience. In the case of the elective clusters, students seldom continue to pursue a self-chosen option in which they do poorly but instead, naturally gravitate toward a strength area. Second, the goal of departmental assessment is to measure the residual effect of earlier training and therefore its effectiveness. Encouraging "exit examination cramming" would only contaminate the process.

During debate on the new Senior Seminar, a member of the University Curriculum Committee argued that not tying student exit test scores to their Seminar course grade gave students no incentive to put their best effort into these tests. Other members, however, were convinced by the argument that these are pre-professional students about to enter a daunting job market. Whatever they could do to spotlight their own strengths and weaknesses and ratify pride in their past accomplishments was clearly in their own self-interest.

**STAGE 6.** Once the Senior Seminar and its exit examination test batteries have actually been put on line (final curricular approval has just been granted for the course), results of the Seminar's testing activities will be regularly shared with the department's Industry Advisory Board. Their suggestions will continue to be solicited as to: (1) how weaknesses in objectives attainment might be rectified; and (2) whether new objectives (and perhaps courses) need to be added and/or existing ones deleted.

While much of the emphasis in this assessment plan has been placed on courses, it is important to note that the cocurricular activities of the department (FM radio station, municipal cable television channel, and chapters of Alpha Epsilon Rho - the National Broadcasting Society and the Radio-Television News Directors Association) play important roles in the integration and application of knowledge and skills first introduced in classes. Open-ended questions are being designed to evaluate the importance of these activities in student professional preparation and to detect any dissonance between course-taught and activity-taught "lessons".

### Conclusion

It must be reemphasized that to be

successful, any assessment plan must meet both the corporate evaluative needs of the sponsoring department and the self-evaluative needs of each student. This requires the isolation of common preferences and purposes linking academic unit and individual learner as well as the coherence of these purposes with the accountability standards embraced by the institution. As Banta (1993) puts it, the pre-eminent task is to "build a sense of shared purpose among students, faculty, and administrators based on clearly articulated and communicated statements of mission and educational goals" (p.365).

The developing Senior Seminar described here attempts to isolate and summarize those goals in a way that speaks to professional demands and measures the academic experiences intended to address those demands. It strives to accomplish its assessment task in a cost-effective manner that expends only .25 FTE. And its structural progression helps remind students of past accomplishments while sensitizing them to future challenges.

The course syllabus for the Senior Seminar appears on the following pages.

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### COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES COURSE SYLLABUS

#### BCA 499 SENIOR SEMINAR 1(0-2) (no lecture/two lab hours)

**Bulletin Description:** Capstone assessment of the student's professional strengths and weaknesses plus refinement of strategies for establishing a successful post-graduation career.

**Prerequisites:** Signed BCA major or minor and senior standing. Must be taken in one of the last two semesters prior to graduation.

**Textbooks and Other Required Student-Furnished Materials:** None. Some very current articles and similar supplementary readings will be provided by the instructor.

**Special Requirements:** This class is part of the BCA major/minor "core." As with all core courses, students are required to earn a minimum grade of "C" for successful course completion.

**General Methodology Used In Teaching the Course:** As a seminar, the bulk of this class will be devoted to two key types of discussion:

1) *Retrospective* discussions that isolate key issues and skills to which each student has been exposed during his/her involvement in BCA courses and cocurricular activities;

2) *Projective* discussions that focus on key trends in the industry and what these trends might require of (a) entry-level and (b) veteran media professionals.

The course will also involve the administration and subsequent analytical discussion of a battery of tests designed to assess the level of student mastery in the "core" and "elective cluster" subject areas taught by the department. "Core" courses are those required of every BCA major and most minors. "Elective cluster" subject areas are more specialized/advanced studies that students choose in order to round out their programs.

**Course Objectives:** Upon completion of the Senior Seminar, students will be able to:

1) Identify and rank order their own professional strengths and weaknesses.

2) Determine how this strength/weakness inventory corresponds to the requirements and emphases of the type of industry position each is seeking.

3) Describe key trends in the electronic media and how these trends will influence the number and configuration of the industry position being sought.

4) Create (a) a resume conforming to industry expectations and (b) patterns for customizing it in order to target specific job classifications.

5) Produce one of the following: audition tape, production reel, writing or sales portfolio suitable for showing to potential employers.

**General Course Outline:** NOTE: THE COURSE WILL BE OFFERED EACH SEMESTER IN TWO HALF-SEMESTER BLOCKS. THUS, EACH SECTION WILL RUN FOR EIGHT WEEKS WITH FOUR HOURS OF MEETING TIME PER WEEK. EACH OF THE FOLLOWING UNITS IS ONE

## WEEK IN LENGTH.

**UNIT I:** Discussion: "What attracted me to study electronic media and is this element still the profession's prime attraction for me?" "Does this particular attraction realistically translate into a career opportunity for me?"

**UNIT II:** Diagnostic tests over the first three core course objectives:

- Survey of the Mass Media
- Audio Production
- Video Production

**UNIT III:** Analytical discussion of the results of the first three core objective diagnostic tests. Audition tape and production reel construction principles.

**UNIT IV:** Diagnostic tests over the last four core course objectives:

- History & New Technologies
- Electronic Media Copywriting
- Mass Media Criticism
- Electronic Media Law & Regulation

**UNIT V:** Analytical discussion of the results of the last four core objective diagnostic tests. Writing and sales portfolio construction principles.

**UNIT VI:** Administration of the elective cluster objective test of each student's choosing; discussion of resume construction and customization techniques.

**UNIT VII:** Analytical discussion of the results of the elective cluster diagnostic tests; discussion of current industry trends and dynamics and their implication for career launch.

**UNIT VIII:** Resume and reel or portfolio revisions; dovetailing of professional

aspirations with self-competency and industry realities.

**Evaluation:** One quarter (25%) of the student's grade will depend on completion of each of the seven "core" test batteries and at least one "elective cluster" battery. Because the prime purpose of these tests is that of individual and departmental assessment rather than mastery of new material, the score on each test will not be factored into the student's grade. The student will be considered to have completed successfully this portion of the course by taking the core and elective cluster batteries within the time frames specified in the course outline.

The remainder of the student's grade will be based on the following, with each of these factors constituting another 25% of the course grade:

1) The quality of informed participation in class discussions.

2) A short paper on industry trends most relevant to each individual's career goals and the competencies these trends most likely will place in demand. The paper's conclusion will compare/contrast student aspirations with that student's diagnostic test results. (Are the strength areas as ratified by the test results among the central components of professional positions being sought?) A finalized professional resume will serve as the paper's Appendix.

3) Construction and refinement of one of the following:

- Performance audition tape
- Production reel

Writing or sales portfolio.

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## Student Production of Television News

### Student Produced Television News: An Examination of Scope, Purpose, and Relationship to Commercial Competition

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Television newscasts produced on college or university campuses for the dual constituencies of student as well as a

surrounding community audiences, fulfill an important niche that commercial broadcasters ignore. Arguably, college radio occupies a similar niche, but its marketplace is often defined, as Greene (1989) found, not by news but by playing music considered too experimental for commercial radio. Similarly, and more recently, student operated radio stations have been studied by Clark (1994), but from the perspective of providing learning laboratories for students, not as media delivering a unique service to their audiences. Instead, when one encounters studies of college media they often resemble the findings of Nelson (1988), which concludes that the value of student produced news media as a "vast resource" resides in university

publications, not TV or radio. Two studies are Ingold (1988), which traces problems associated with student produced television newscasts at the University of North Carolina and Silvia (1993), which examines differences in the level and methods of staff technical training between commercial and college television.

### Purpose and Method

The current study attempts to scrutinize student produced television newscasts from the perspectives of their scope, purpose, and how they relate to the commercial TV newscasts within their marketplaces. This is accomplished by:

(1) a survey of students and faculty/staff advisors active in the process