

2010

Surveys of Editors and News Directors

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The Radio-Television News Directors Association Women & Minorities Survey is conducted by RTNDA and Hofstra University.

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Executive Summary

- Daily newspapers in 2010 hired nearly a third of their newsroom employees directly from college. That figure is up 5 percentage points from 2005. The industry hired a smaller percentage of its newsroom employees from other newspapers.
- Nearly nine in 10 of the newsroom hires by daily newspapers in 2010 who came directly from college had a journalism or mass communication degree. That figure has been relatively consistent for 35 years.
- Television newsrooms that hired directly from college also relied heavily on journalism and mass communication programs. As in the past, nine in 10 of their hires directly from college had a journalism or mass communication degrees.
- Radio newsroom hires directly from college also were likely in 2010 to have with a journalism or mass communications degree. The ratio also was nine out of 10. That figure also has been stable going back to at least 2000.
- Daily newspapers hired an estimated 4,180 persons in 2010, or only half the 8,080 hired in 2005.
- Television newsrooms in 2010 hired 4,365 persons, compared with 7,670 five years earlier. The 2010 hiring is a little more than half what it was in 2005.
- Radio newsrooms hired 564 persons in 2010, compared with 1,400 five years earlier. The 2010 hiring was only 40% of what it was in 2005.
- Daily newspapers had 1,605 paid interns working for them in 2010, compared with 2,910 in 2005. They had 2,210 unpaid interns in 2010, compared with 1,665 in 2005. The total number of internships dropped from 4,575 to 3,815.
- The estimated number of full-time persons working in the newsrooms of daily newspapers in 2010 was 40,760, or a drop of 35% from the 62,750 of 2005.
- The estimated number of part-time persons working in the newsrooms of daily newspapers in 2010 was 3,955, a drop of 50% from the 7,880 of five years ago.

- In 1990 and 2000, the percentage of college graduates hired directly by daily newspapers who had a journalism degree was slightly lower than in other years. Those are years in which college graduates had relatively high levels of employment six to eight months after graduation from college. The suggestion is that the newspaper industry attracts fewer journalism and mass communication graduates in those periods when the job market is strong and graduates have other career options.

Project Background

The Dow Jones Newspaper Fund began surveying daily newspaper editors in 1970 to learn about their hiring activities—how many people they hired, how many of them were directly from the university, and how many of them had journalism degrees. The survey was a companion to the *Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates*, which was initiated by the Fund in 1964.

The *Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates* and the *Daily Newspaper Hiring Survey* moved to Ohio State University, beginning with the 1987 graduate survey. Both surveys moved to the University of Georgia in the autumn of 1997.

The *Daily Newspaper Hiring Survey* has been conducted in 1970, 1974, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005 and 2010. In 1990, 2000, 2005 and 2010, a select number of comparable questions on hiring by news directors in television and radio newsrooms was added to the Radio-Television News Directors Association Women & Minorities Survey. In 1995, these same questions were included in a survey of television news directors conducted as part of the SPJ Jane Pauley Taskforce on Mass Communication Education.

The data from these surveys provide the data for this report.

About the 2010 RTDNA Hofstra University Survey

The RTDNA/Hofstra University Survey was conducted (by mail, fax, phone and online) in the fourth quarter of 2010 among all 1,729 operating, non-satellite television stations and a random sample of 3,000 radio stations. Valid responses came from 1,360 television stations (78.7%) and 203 radio news directors and general managers representing 603 radio stations. Some data sets (e.g. the number of TV stations originating local news, getting it from others and women TV news directors) are based on a complete census and are not projected from a smaller sample.

About the 2010 Daily Newspaper Hiring Survey

The *2010 Daily Newspaper Hiring Survey* was conducted from March to July of 2011 among editors of the 1,392 daily newspapers listed in the *Editor & Publisher International Year Book* for 2010. The questionnaire asked about newsroom hiring in 2010. Persons holding the title of editor at each of the newspapers listed were mailed a letter with instructions to take the survey online in early March and late April. The editors also were sent requests to participate via email in late March and sent subsequent weekly emails beginning in early April.

In early June, 357 surveys had been completed online. From that point until the end of July, editors were contacted by phone and administered the same questionnaire that was available online. The editor of every operational paper was reached either by mail, phone or email. Attempts were made to contact the editors until they had responded either with a completed survey, with a refusal or with a notification that the paper was no longer in operation. In four cases, the recipient indicated that a single newsroom produced the content for papers with more than one title. In these cases, the data were filed as if for a single newspaper. Two papers closed since the release of the 2010 *Editor & Publisher International Year Book*. Thus, the actual number of newspapers in the population was 1,386.

In total, 715 surveys were completed either online or by telephone. Fifty-five newspapers explicitly refused to participate; the others simply did not respond to the repeated requests for cooperation. Simple return rate was 51.6%. An analysis of return by circulation size showed that the final sample of 715 newspapers reflected this characteristic of the population.

Chart 1. Where Daily Newspapers Found Full-Time Newsroom Employees

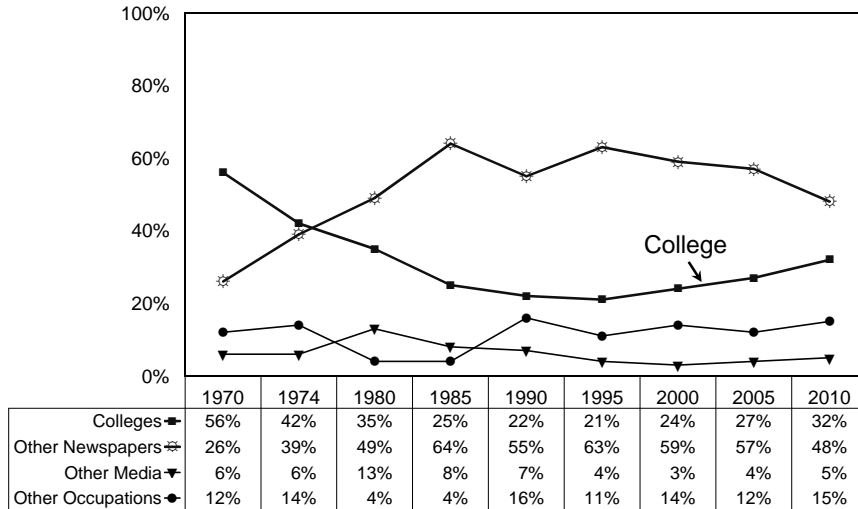


Chart 2. Percentage of Hires from College with Journalism and Mass Communications Degrees in Daily Newspapers

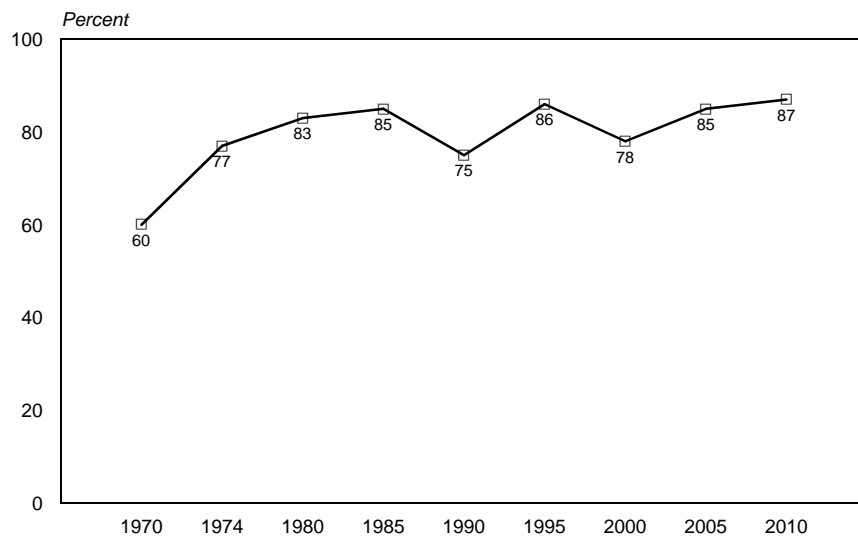


Chart 3: Percentage of Hires from College with Journalism and Mass Communications Degrees: Television and Radio

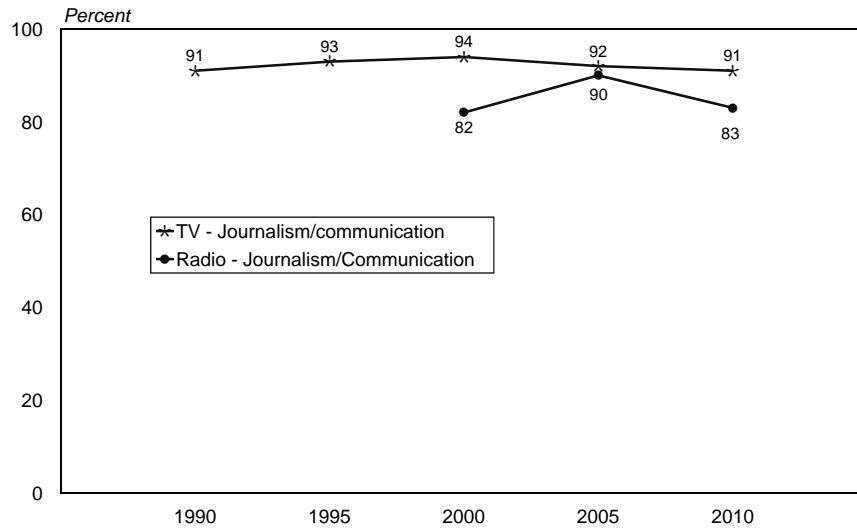


Chart 4: Hiring in Newspapers, Tv Local Newsrooms and Radio Local Newsrooms: 2005 and 2010

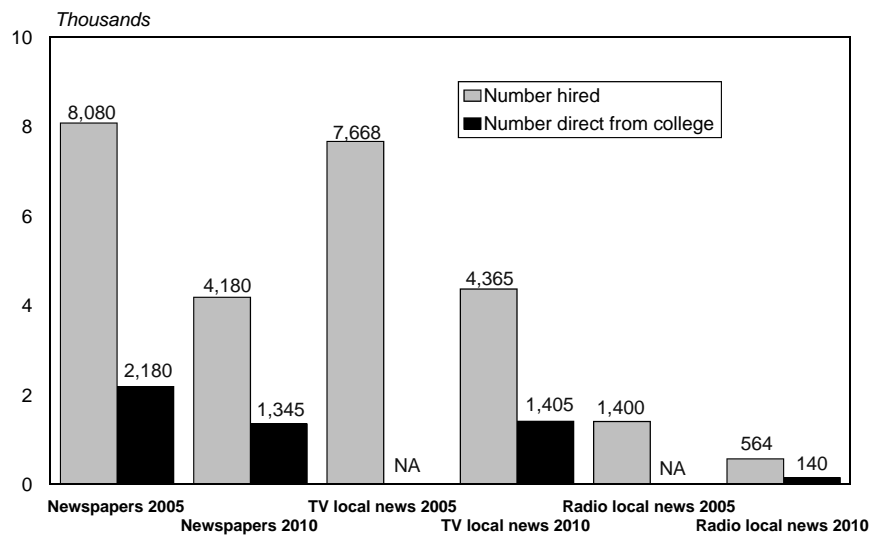


Chart 5: Internships at Daily Newspapers: 2005-2010

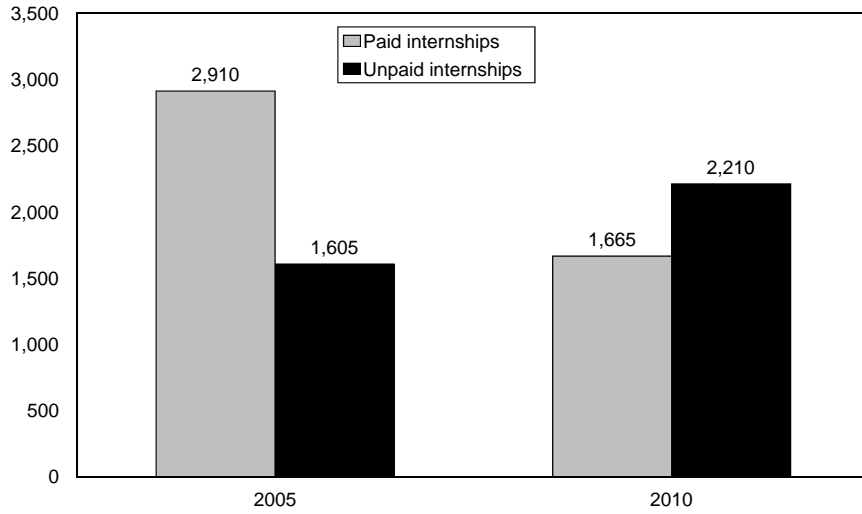


Chart 6: Daily Newspapers Staff Size: 2005 and 2010

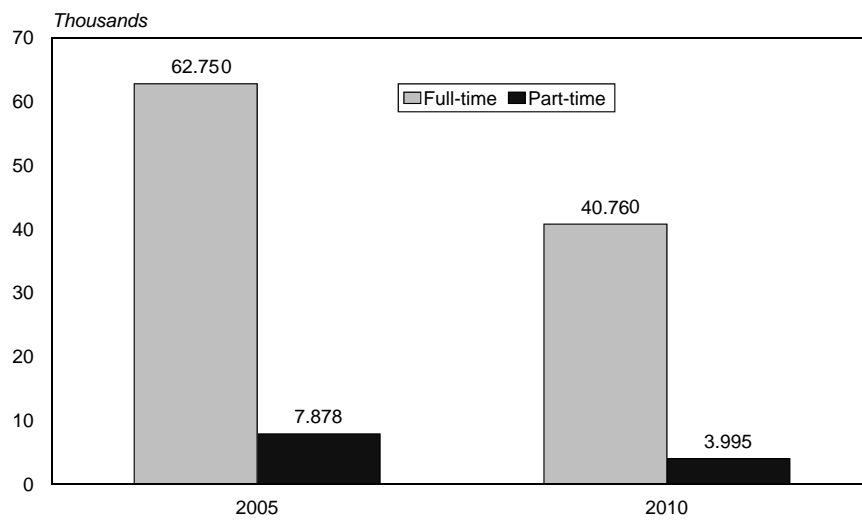


Chart 7: Daily Newspaper Hiring and Level of Employment of Journalism and Mass Communication Graduates

