Annual Enrollment Report: Graduate and Undergraduate Enrollments Increase Sharply

LEE B. BECKER, TUDOR VLAD, JISU HUH, AND NANCY R. MACE

Enrollments at both the graduate and undergraduate level increased in the autumn of 2002, resulting in the largest number of students enrolled in journalism and mass communication ever. The growth in graduate enrollment follows a period of decline, while the increase in undergraduate enrollment continues a pattern of growth. The percentage of undergraduates enrolled who were female increased slightly, as did the percentage of students who were African-American.

After a period of significant decline going back to 1995, graduate enrollments in journalism and mass communication programs in the United States increased in the autumn of 2002, resulting in what almost certainly is the largest enrollment ever in the field. The number of students enrolled in master’s degree programs increased 20.8% compared to a year earlier, and doctoral program enrollment increased 13.4%.

Undergraduate enrollment in U.S. journalism and mass communication programs also grew in academic year 2002-2003 in comparison to a year earlier. A total of 182,218 undergraduate students were studying journalism and mass communication across the country, up 6.0% from academic year 2001-2002. The percentage growth one year earlier had been only 2.2.

The number of bachelor’s degrees granted in academic year 2001-2002 was 42,060, up 9.4% from 2000-2001, while the number of graduate degrees granted increased 14.0% to 3,879. Most of the graduate degrees (3,698) were at the master’s level.

These and other findings, from the Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Enrollments, suggest that journalism and mass communication enrollments, particularly at the undergraduate level, are likely to increase in the next several years. In the autumn of 2002, freshman enrollment was 4.6% higher than a year ago, and sophomore enrollment was up 3.1%. Enrollment at the junior level was 8.2% higher than a year earlier, and the number of seniors was 7.1% more than in 2002.

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The percentage of female undergraduate students enrolled in journalism and mass communication programs increased slightly in 2002-2003 to 64.1%, resulting in the highest percentage since the end of World War II. Women made up an even higher percentage of the master’s level students (67.2%) and 54.7% of the enrolled doctoral students. Women have been more than the majority of enrolled doctoral students every year now since 1997.

The percentage of African-American students enrolled in undergraduate journalism and mass communication programs in the fall of 2002 was 13.7%, the highest percentage ever recorded in the enrollment survey. Overall, 71.1% of the enrolled students were classified as “White,” nearly reaching the low point for this figure in 1997.

The percentage of African-American students enrolled in journalism and mass communication master’s degree programs stood at 11.2%, the highest level ever recorded in the enrollment survey.

Methodology

The methods used in the Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Enrollments have remained unchanged since 1988. Schools included in this survey are listed in either the Journalism & Mass Communication Directory, published by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, or The Journalist’s Road to Success: A Career Guide, formerly published and printed by the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund, Inc., and now available on the web. All degree-granting senior colleges and universities with courses organized under the labels of journalism and mass communication are invited to be listed in the AEJMC Directory. To be included in the Guide, the college or university must offer at least ten courses in neweditorial journalism, and those courses must include core courses, such as an introduction to the mass media and press law and ethics, as well as basic skills courses, such as reporting and editing. Since 1992, the two journalism programs in Puerto Rico listed in the AEJMC Directory have been included in the population.

A combination of these two directories produced 469 listings in 2002. In October 2002 a questionnaire was mailed to the administrator of each of these programs. A second mailing of this questionnaire was sent to the nonresponding schools in December. A third mailing was sent to the nonresponding schools in January. In February, the administrators were sent a fourth mailing. The 170 administrators who had not responded by the beginning of April were contacted by telephone and asked to answer as many of the questions over the telephone as possible.

The questionnaire asked the administrators to provide information on total enrollments in autumn of 2002, enrollment by year in school, enrollment by sequence of study, enrollment by gender, and enrollment by racial or ethnic group. In addition, administrators were asked to indicate the number and type of degrees granted in the 2001-2002 academic year, degrees granted by sequence of study, degrees granted by gender, and degrees granted by racial group.

Five of the 469 programs were eliminated from the population when
the administrator returned a questionnaire indicating that the program no longer offered journalism or mass communication. Additionally, two journalism and mass communication programs merged. Data were obtained for all of the remaining 463 programs in the population. Of these, 331 were listed in both directories, 75 were only in the AEJMC listing, and 57 were only in the Dow Jones Guide.

As in the past, there was great variability in the detail and precision of the information administrators provided. Some administrators answered every question, while others answered only a few. Data on degrees offered and on enrollments at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels were obtained from all of the 463 programs. Of all these programs, 459 offered bachelor's degree programs, 179 offered master's degree programs, and 41 offered doctoral programs. Data on degrees granted at the undergraduate level were obtained for 418 of the 454 undergraduate programs, or 92.1%. For master's programs, the number was 157 of 179, or 87.7%. Thirty-six of the 41 doctoral programs reported number of degrees granted, or 87.8%.

Data from the program administrators were entered into a data file. Inconsistencies in the original documents, where noted, were corrected, sometimes by eliminating obviously erroneous information. Reports by program administrators that were not clearly in error were taken as accurate.

The AEJMC Directory lists membership of the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication (ASJMC) and accreditation by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC). This information was included in the data file. The most complete data were available for the 105 accredited programs. In general, less complete data were available for the 102 schools that were members of ASJMC but not accredited by ACEJMC. The 256 schools without accreditation or ASJMC membership had the least complete data. In general, these latter schools are smaller than the accredited or ASJMC-affiliated schools.

These two characteristics—accreditation and ASJMC membership—serve as ways of differentiating the 463 journalism and mass communication programs in the population. As was the case in recent years, these two characteristics were used in 2002 to make projections based on the data reported. Data from the reporting accredited schools were used to estimate characteristics of the accredited schools for which there was any missing information. Similarly, statistical means from the nonaccredited ASJMC schools were used to estimate missing data for similar schools, and data from the nonaccredited schools not affiliated with ASJMC were used to estimate missing data for those programs. The overall estimates, then, were based on complete information and best approximations about data not reported.

**Enrollments**

Journalism and mass communication programs enrolled 194,500 students in the autumn of 2002, a 6.8% increase from a year earlier. Of these students, 182,218 were enrolled in undergraduate programs, and 12,282 were enrolled in graduate programs.

The total number of undergraduate journalism and mass communication
students enrolled increased 6.0% compared to a year earlier. In the autumn of 2002, 182,218 undergraduate students were studying journalism and mass communication across the country, compared with 171,941 a year earlier. Undergraduate enrollments in the field of journalism and mass communication have grown each year since 1993, as Figure 1 shows. Growth since 1999 has been 21.3%!

Enrollment at the master’s level in the autumn of 2002 was 10,937, up 20.8% from the figure of 9,055 just a year earlier. Enrollment at the doctoral level was up 13.4%, to 1,345 students. Overall, graduate enrollment increased 19.9% in the autumn of 2002 from 2001. The dramatic increase in enrollment at the master’s level follows a period of relatively constant decline since 1995, as Figure 1 makes clear, while doctoral enrollment, small in comparison, was in 2002 not far from the record level of the year 2000.

Despite the growth in graduate enrollments in the autumn of 2002, the field of journalism and mass communication was still heavily focused, at least in terms of numbers, on undergraduate rather than graduate students. In 2002, 93.7% of the students in journalism and mass communication programs were undergraduates, while that figure was 94.4% a year earlier. In 1995, undergraduate enrollment made up 91.6% of the total enrollment in journalism and mass communication programs around the country.

Enrollments increased in each class at the undergraduate level in the autumn of 2002 compared with a year earlier. The growth was most strong at the junior (8.2%) and senior (7.1%) levels. Some programs do not count students as part of their enrollments until they become juniors. Growth also was strong at the freshman (4.6%) and sophomore (3.1%) levels.

In general, the pattern in enrollments in journalism and mass communication undergraduate programs has mirrored that of enrollments across all fields. Undergraduate enrollments nationally declined from 1992 to 1995, and only in 1999 surpassed the level of enrollments in 1992. In journalism and mass communication, enrollments at the undergraduate level bottomed out in 1993, but growth in 1994 was very small (0.3%), as was growth from 1994 to 1995 (0.4%). Nationally, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is projecting enrollment growth at the undergraduate level through at least 2012.

Journalism and mass communication graduate enrollments, however, have not mirrored national enrollments across all fields. Unlike in the field of journalism and mass communication, nationally graduate enrollments have shown the same growth pattern as undergraduate enrollments. In the 1994-2000 period, graduate enrollments grew, on average, 1.2% per year, and NCES projects continued growth in graduate enrollments nationally through at least 2012.

Figure 1: Autumn Enrollments, Undergraduate and Graduate
So far, however, the current economic slowdown has not adversely affected national undergraduate enrollments in journalism and mass communication. Undergraduate enrollments nationally seem to be affected by both the national unemployment rate and the size of the 18- to 24-year-old population and the 25- to 29-year-old population.

Graduate enrollments in journalism and mass communication grew during the economic difficulties of the early 1990s, with the peak in master’s degree enrollments—prior to 2002—being in 1995. In 1990, 8,355 students were enrolled in journalism and mass communication master’s degree programs, and that figure grew each year until 1995 to 10,934 students. In the boom years of the late 1990s, enrollments in journalism and mass communication programs declined, bottoming at 8,920 students in the boom year of 1999. As noted above, however, nationally, graduate enroll-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>PREDICTORS OF ENROLLMENTS, 1988-2002</th>
<th>Bachelor’s</th>
<th>Master’s</th>
<th>Doctoral</th>
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<tr>
<td>Full-Time Employment Rate JMC Bachelor’s Degree Recipients*</td>
<td>0.18</td>
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<td>0.29</td>
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<td>N</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.18</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Real Annual Salary JMC Master’s Degree Recipients*</td>
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<td>National Unemployment Rate**</td>
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<td>National Unemployment Rate 20-24-Year-Olds**</td>
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<td>Real Advertising Total Revenues****</td>
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</table>

ments across all fields grew steadily through the 1990s and early years of 2000.

Table 1, which focuses on journalism and mass communication enrollments at the bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral levels, illuminates some of the differences between predictors of undergraduate and graduate enrollments in the 1988 to 2002 period. Undergraduate enrollments are slightly positively related to the level of full-time employment of bachelor’s and master’s degree recipients, as measured in the Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates. Annual salary of the bachelor’s degree recipients (adjusted for inflation) is a reasonably strong predictor of enrollments ($r = 0.72$), while salary of the master’s degree recipients is unrelated to undergraduate enrollment. Undergraduate journalism and mass communication enrollments are negatively related to the national unemployment rates, and positively related to Gross Domestic Product (adjusted for inflation) and total advertising revenues (adjusted for inflation). Total advertising revenues are a significant indicator of the vitality of the communication industries that employ many journalism and mass communication graduates. In sum, when the economy is good, undergraduate enrollments in journalism and mass communication have tended to increase.

Enrollments in journalism and mass communication master’s programs, in contrast, are slightly negatively related to the level of full-time employment of journalism and mass communication bachelor’s degree and master’s degree recipients. Salaries received by the graduates also negatively predict master’s level enrollments. The national unemployment rate is unrelated to enrollments in master’s programs in journalism and mass communication. Enrollments in these programs also are less strongly related to economic growth indicators than is true for undergraduate enrollments.

Doctoral degree enrollments, for the most part, follow the pattern of bachelor’s degree enrollments more than the pattern for master’s program enrollments.

Clearly much is unexplained about enrollments by these simple analyses. Yet they do suggest that enrollments at the bachelor’s and master’s degree levels are driven by different forces. The data support the common view that when the economy is weak, students with an interest in journalism and mass communication careers who already hold a bachelor’s degree return to school for a master’s degree. When the economy is strong, potential students stay with their jobs.

In general, undergraduate enrollments are an indicator of a strong economy. Despite that general pattern, it seems that any negative effect of the current weakness in the job market on undergraduate enrollments has been offset by other factors, such as an increase in size of the college-age population. If the economy recovers, enrollments at the undergraduate level might experience even more growth pressure.

The 2002 undergraduate enrollment count is based on reports of the 459 units offering undergraduate journalism and mass communication programs. In 2001, there were 454 such programs. The number of master’s programs in 2002 was 179, up from 177 in 2001. In 2002, 41 of the journalism and mass commu-
Figure 2
DEGREES GRANTED, UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE

Source: Annual Survey of Journalism and Mass Communication Enrollments

Bachelor's: 2,399, 2,564, 2,551, 2,965, 2,375
Masters: 3,412, 3,645
Doctorate: 3,648

1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003
communication programs in the population reported offering a doctorate, up from 39 a year earlier.

The largest undergraduate enrollment reported for the 2002 enrollment survey was by the College of Communication Arts and Sciences at Michigan State University, with 3,585 students. This was followed by Pennsylvania State with 3,449 students, Middle Tennessee State University with 3,276 students, and Florida with 3,007 students. The next largest program, Boston University, enrolled nearly 900 fewer students than Florida, with a total enrollment of 2,119. Rounding out the top 10 programs in terms of size were the University of Central Florida with 2,103 students, California State University at Fullerton with 2,068, Ball State University with 1,995 students, the University of the Sacred Heart in Puerto Rico with 1,940 students, and Syracuse University with 1,871.

The largest master’s program, in terms of students enrolled in the autumn of 2002, was at Syracuse University, with 405 students. Northwestern University has the second-largest program with 385 students, followed by Michigan State University with 316, Boston University with 315, and Columbia with 308. Other programs in the top 10 in terms of size were at American University (280), Ball State (225), the University of Missouri (208), Roosevelt University (203), and New York University (200).

Michigan State reported the largest number of doctoral students, with 87 enrolled in the autumn of 2002. The University of Utah reported an enrollment of 75 in its doctoral program, followed by enrollments of 60 reported by Howard University, the University of Washington, and Purdue University.

The remaining top five programs in terms of size were Duquesne University (54); University of Wisconsin-Madison, School of Journalism (53); University of Illinois (52); University of Florida (51); and Wayne State University (48).

Enrollments for each of the 463 journalism and mass communication programs are shown in the Appendix at the end of this report.

Degrees Granted

Enrollments represent student interests and administrative responsibility of the journalism and mass communication programs; degrees granted represent the output. In academic year 2001-2002, journalism and mass communication programs granted 45,939 degrees, an increase of 9.8% over a year earlier. The growth in the number of degrees granted in academic year 2000-2001 over a year earlier had been only 0.1%. Between September 1, 2001, and August 31, 2002, the nation's 463 journalism and mass communication programs granted 4,105 more degrees than in academic year 2000-2001.

The number of bachelor’s degrees granted (42,060) was 9.4% more than a year earlier, while the growth in the number of graduate degrees (3,879) was 14.0%. The number of graduate degrees in academic year 2000-2001 had declined by 3.3% compared to a year earlier (Figure 2). In 2001-2002, the nation’s journalism and mass communication programs granted 3,698 master’s degrees (a 14.2% increase) and 181 doctoral degrees (a growth of 9.7%).

As Figure 2 shows, the number of undergraduate degrees granted has
grown steadily since the 1996-1997 academic year. The number of bachelor’s degrees granted had declined following the recession of the early 1990s. Master’s degrees granted, in contrast, increased during the economic slowdown of the first part of the last decade and then dropped as the economy improved. The number of doctoral degrees granted in 2001-2002 was double what it was in 1987-1988.

Michigan State University was the largest program in terms of degrees granted in academic year 2001-2002, with 950 degrees awarded. University of Florida (749), Pennsylvania State (729), Boston University (654), and California State University Fullerton (638) follow. Rounding out the top 10 in terms of number of bachelor’s degrees granted were California State University Sacramento (550), University of Central Florida (523), University of Georgia (445), Syracuse University (420), and San Diego State University (415).

Northwestern University reported granting 263 master’s degrees in academic year 2001-2002, putting it on the top of reporting programs in terms of size. Following were Columbia with 254 degrees, Boston University with 179, New York University with 150, and American University with 150. The next five programs in terms of number of master’s degrees granted were Ball State University (133), Michigan State University (119), Syracuse University (105), Roosevelt University (69), and University of Florida (67).

The top program, in terms of number of doctoral degrees granted in academic year 2001-2002, was the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with 19 degrees granted. Following were Howard University with 16, Michigan State University and Wayne State University each with 11, and the University of Washington with 10. Other programs in the top 10 in terms of number of doctoral degrees granted were the University of Georgia and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, each with nine degrees granted, Pennsylvania State University and the University of Minnesota, each with eight, and the University of Florida, with six.

Degrees granted for the journalism and mass communication programs providing such data are shown in the Appendix at the end of this report.

The Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Enrollments includes only programs that label themselves as having a mass communication orientation or component (through their inclusion in the AEJMC Directory) or that have a journalism core (as indicated by their listing in the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund Career Guide). Other communication programs at the same university not included in either of these directories are not included in the survey.

All universities in the United States that receive or want to receive any form of federal funding are expected to report data on the number of degrees granted by major as part of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) operated by the U.S. National Center for Education Statistics. Fourteen different codes are used for majors that in some way involve communication. Nine of these fall under the general heading of Communications, for “instructional programs that describe the creation, transmission and evaluation of messages.” These are Advertising, Journalism, Broadcast
Journalism, Mass Communications, Journalism and Mass Communication (Other), Public Relations & Organizational Communication, Radio and Television Broadcasting, and Communications (Other).

Four of the codes fall under the general heading of Communications Technologies, for “instructional programs that prepare individuals to support and assist communications professionals and skilled communication workers.” These are Educational/Instructional Media Technology, Photographic Technology/Technician, Radio and Television Broadcasting Technology, and Communications Technology/Technicians (Other).

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degrees Awarded</th>
<th>Actual Count Enrollment Survey</th>
<th>Projected for Enrollment Survey</th>
<th>Total Communication (excluding Speech) IPEDS</th>
<th>Total Communication and Speech Communication IPEDS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s</td>
<td>38,570</td>
<td>42,060</td>
<td>66,442</td>
<td>76,445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
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<td>3,698</td>
<td>6,069</td>
<td>6,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Units</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>1,041</td>
<td>1,095</td>
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</table>

* The number of reporting units was 414 (of 459) at the bachelor’s degree level, 155 (of 177) at the master’s degree level, and 36 (of 41) at the doctoral level.

In the 2001-2002 IPEDS report, 1,095 universities reported awarding some form of communication degree at the bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral level, based on this classification system. A year earlier, 1,060 universities reported having granted a communication degree. Of these 1,095 universities, 54 offered only a communication degree classified as speech communication. The remaining offered one of the other 13 communication degrees, all of which involve some element of message construction or communication technology.

Based on the IPEDS filings, a total of 66,442 bachelor’s degrees were granted in academic year 2001-2002 in the broad field of communications by 1,041 different universities (Table 2). This represents an increase of 11.0% in the number of degrees granted over a year earlier, when 981 universities filed data to IPEDS. If Speech Communica-
tion is included, the total number of bachelor's degrees granted was 76,445, which is 11.9% more than a year earlier.

At the master's level, the IPEDS file includes 6,069 master's degree filings in the broad field of communication, an increase of 5.8% over a year earlier. If Speech Communication is included, the total number of master's degrees granted in academic year 2001-2002 was 6,610, which is up 5.5% from a year earlier.

At the doctoral level, according to the IPEDS reports, 383 degrees were granted in the field of communications, up by 3.2% from the figure of 371 a year earlier. If Speech Communication is included, the doctoral figure was 501, up 3.7% from the 483 figure of a year earlier.

The data indicate that degrees granted increased less in journalism and mass communication than in the broader field of communication, particularly if Speech Communication is included. The growth rate for journalism and mass communication in terms of degrees granted was 9.4% while the figure was 11.0% for communication if Speech Communication is not included and 11.9% if it is.

At the graduate level, however, the reverse is true. The number of master's degrees granted increased 14.2% in mass communication programs, based on the enrollment survey, while it increased 5.8% in communications programs, based on the IPEDS reports, and 5.5% if Speech Communication is included. At the doctoral level, degrees granted increased 9.7% in the journalism and mass communication survey, while they increased 3.2% for communication programs, based on the IPEDS reports, and 3.7% if Speech Communication is included.

Gender

In the autumn of 2002, an estimated 64.1% of the students studying for a bachelor's degree at the nation's journalism and mass communication programs were female. In 2002, 64.6% of those who earned bachelor's degrees from those same programs were female. Neither figure has been this high since the gender of enrolled students and graduates of journalism and mass communication programs was first measured systematically back in the late 1960s. It probably is true that the figure has not been so high since the years of World War II, when few male students attended universities.

While the percentage of enrolled female students at the undergraduate level has been hovering at or above 60 since the middle of the 1980s, since 1996 the figure has increased slightly almost every year, leading to a small but noticeable gain of four percentage points since that time. The gain in terms of the gender of those who earn journalism and mass communication undergraduate degrees is less pronounced, but this figure, too, seems to be increasing.

Figures 3 and 4 show the trend lines back to 1968. The data are all from the enrollment survey, which was conducted from 1968 until 1997 in the School of Journalism at Ohio State University under the direction of Dr. Paul Peterson. The methodology changed in 1987, as noted above, but the change is unlikely to affect the estimates of gender.

The biggest period of change in the gender of enrolled undergraduates in
Figure 3
MINORITY AND FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT

Source: Annual Survey of Journalists & Mass Communication Enrollments
journalism and mass communication occurred in the late 1970s. In 1976, 43% of the undergraduate students were female. In 1978, the figure was 53%. It took another 23 years to add another 10 percentage points. What happened in the late 1970s to bring on this sudden change remains open to speculation.

Nationally, across all fields, females made up more than half the undergraduate enrollment after the war in 1979, or just a year after women became the majority in journalism and mass communication. In 1976, women nationally were 48.0% of the enrolled students, becoming just under 50% the following year and 51% in 1979. So journalism and mass communication, at 43% female in 1976, was actually lagging the national data that year. Journalism and mass communication led the national data just slightly in 1977.

Since 1978, however, journalism and mass communication has outpaced the university in terms of the field’s appeal to women. Overall, university undergraduate enrollments reached 56% only in 1992 and have grown little since that time. Journalism and mass communication enrollments were 56% female in 1979 and since have grown to 64%.

**Race and Ethnicity**

The percentage of students enrolled in undergraduate journalism and mass communication programs in the fall of 2002 who were African-American was 13.7%—the highest percentage ever recorded in the enrollment survey. At the undergraduate level, 6.4% were Hispanic, 3.2% were Asian-American, 2.0% were Native American, and 2.3% were classified as “Other.” At the undergraduate level, 1.3% were foreign, with the remaining 71.1% classified as White. In 2001, 12.2% of the students were African-American, 6.7% were Hispanic, 3.2% were Asian-American, 2.0% were Native-American, and 2.3% were classified as “Other.” That year, 2.3% were foreign and 73.7% were White.

At the master’s level, 11.2% of the students in journalism and mass communication programs in the autumn of 2002 were African-American—also the highest level ever recorded in the enrollment survey. In 2002, 4.8% of the master’s students were Hispanic, 4.7% were Asian-American, 0.4% were Native American, 3.1% were “Other,” 12.7% were foreign, and 63.1% were White.

Students enrolled in journalism and mass communication doctoral programs were 9.9% African-American, 2.3% Hispanic, 7.5% Asian-American, 0.5% Native American, 3.1% “Other,” 30.6% foreign, and 46.1% White.

Of those who earned bachelor’s degrees from journalism and mass communication programs in 2001-2002, 10.2% were African-American, 5.4% were Hispanic, 3.1% were Asian-American, 1.3% were Native-American, 2.5% were “Other,” 1.8% were foreign, and 75.8% were White. At the master’s level, the figures were African-American (8.2%), Hispanic (3.5%), Asian-American (6.3%), Native-American (0.3%), “Other” (2.5%), foreign (2.5%), and White (65.7%). At the doctoral level, the figures were African-American (10.5%), Hispanic (3.9%), Asian-American (7.9%), Native-American (0.0%), “Other” (2.0%), foreign (30.0%), and White (45.8%).

Race and ethnicity of students enrolled in journalism and mass commu-
Figure 4
Bachelor's Degrees Granted to Females and Minorities

Source: Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Enrollments
Communication programs around the country was first measured in the enrollment survey in 1973. That year, only 3% of the enrolled undergraduate students were classified as members of a racial or ethnic minority (Figure 3). That figure increased by 10 percentage points by 1988 and then increased by more than another 10 points in the next five years.

The large increase from 1991 to 1992, at first glance, appears to be an artifact. In 1992, the two journalism programs in Puerto Rico—at the University of Puerto Rico and at Sacred Heart University—were included for the first time in the population, and the percentage of students labeled as African-American and as Hispanic increased, as did the percentage of students labeled as “Other.” In fact, however, neither of these programs reported data by race or ethnicity that year, so the change is not attributable to their inclusion. The percentage of students labeled as a member of a minority group has been relatively constant since that time.

Race and ethnicity of graduates of journalism and mass communication programs have been measured only since the early 1980s (Figure 4). The percentage of students classified as minorities among the graduates roughly mirrors that of enrolled students, but the figure is consistently a bit lower, indicating that retention of minority students through graduation is almost certainly lower than of other students. As in the enrollment data, there is a jump in the percentage of minority students from 1991 to 1992, but the jump is not as noticeable as at the enrollment level.

The field of journalism and mass communication generally has lagged university undergraduate enrollments across all fields in terms of race and ethnicity. In 1976, 18% of the undergraduates enrolled at U.S. universities were racial or ethnic minorities. In journalism and mass communication that year, the figure was only 7%. By 1990, the national figure had grown to 22%, while in journalism and mass communication it was 20%. In 1995, nationally, 28% of the undergraduates were classified as racial or ethnic minorities, and in journalism and mass communication it was 25%. In 2000, 32% of the enrolled undergraduates across all majors were classified as members of racial or ethnic minority groups. In journalism and mass communication that figure was 28%.

Conclusions

Enrollments in the nation’s journalism and mass communication programs grew markedly in the autumn of 2002. Undergraduate enrollments, which had increased only 2.2% the year earlier, increased 6.0%. Graduate enrollments, which had declined 4.4% a year earlier, increased 19.9%. Growth in graduate enrollments was both at the master’s and doctoral levels.

While the rate of growth in undergraduate enrollments has varied year to year since 1993, the pattern is unmistakable. Enrollments are increasing, and there is little evidence that this basic picture will change. The economic downturn of the last few years has not adversely affected enrollments, as the recession of a decade ago did. The underlying demand for university study, and study in the field of journalism and mass communication, seems quite robust.

Graduate enrollments in journalism and mass communication have
shown a different pattern. The growth in 2002 reversed a trend back to the middle of the 1990s of declining enrollments. This decline has bucked the national trend of slight growth in graduate enrollments during this period.

Analyses of some gross economic indicators suggest that, in recent history at least, undergraduate enrollments have been a positive indicator of the economy, meaning that enrollments have been up when the economy has been strong. At the master's level, however, enrollments are a negative economic indicator. Students seem to return for a graduate degree in journalism and mass communication when the economy is weak.

If the economy improves—and the signals at this writing are mixed—graduate enrollments could start to drop again. The consequences for the field of journalism and mass communication would be significant. With the growth in graduate enrollments in 2002, the percentage of students seeking a graduate degree in journalism and mass communication programs increased slightly. Without continued growth in graduate enrollments, the field could become one in which graduate enrollments are an insignificant part of the picture. The consequences for the field in terms of standing within the university, in terms of receipt of outside research funds, and in terms of scholarly activity could be significant. In 2002, only 6.3% of the students in journalism and mass communication programs were studying for advanced degrees.

Across all fields, 12.3% of all students at degree-granting universities were working toward a graduate degree in 2002, the last year for which data are available. In the field of journalism and mass communication, the figure that year was less than half that at 6.0%. In academic year 2001-2002 in the field of journalism and mass communication, 8.4% of the degrees granted were at the graduate level—either for a master's degree or for a doctorate. The figure for the 2000-2001 academic year was 8.1%. That year, across all fields, graduate students earned 29.2% of all degrees granted at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral level. In the field of “liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities,” the figure was 8.0%. For the social sciences (excluding psychology) and history, 12.1% of the degrees granted that year were at the graduate level. For psychology, the figure was 21.3%. For English language and literature, it was 14.1%. For the broad field of communications, including journalism and mass communication, the figure was 8.8%. The field of journalism and mass communication stands out in this group as decidedly undergraduate in focus.

The field of journalism and mass communication also is becoming more female, and it is becoming less White. After years of little change in the percentage of female students, that figure has increased slightly in recent years. The percentage of enrolled female students at the undergraduate level is higher than is true in the university generally, and journalism and mass communication as a field is becoming more female more quickly than is the university. Clearly, this is an area of study with considerable appeal to female undergraduates.

The percentage of African-American students in 2002 was the highest it has been since the enrollment survey started charting race and ethnicity. But the field still lags the university over-
all. And the field has not yet reached parity with the population. Data from the 2000 Census indicated that 31% of the U.S. population was “minority.” Journalism and mass communication programs three years later have not yet reached that moving target, though the university overall has.

Journalism and mass communication education has some catching up to do. Movement is slow, but it is in the right direction.