

1999
Annual Survey of Journalism
&
Mass Communication Graduates

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Overview and Summary

- ❑ The labor market for journalism and mass communication graduates remained very strong in 1999. More than eight of ten bachelor's degree recipients had at least one job offer upon graduation. Six to eight months after graduation more than three-quarters of bachelor's degree recipients reported holding a full-time job.
- ❑ The gap in the employment levels of bachelor's degree recipients who are members of racial and ethnic minorities and those who are not opened up again in 1999, to 5.3%. The percent of minorities with full-time employment dropped slightly from 77.7% to 76.6%, while full-time employment of non-minorities moved up just slightly from 81.3% to 81.9%.
- ❑ The number of bachelor's degree recipients taking jobs in online or Internet publishing continues to be small, but the number has nearly doubled from a year earlier.
- ❑ Salaries paid to graduates of journalism and mass communication programs increased again in 1999. In unadjusted dollars, the median salary for bachelor's degree recipients increased by \$1,000 to \$25,000, representing the fourth straight year of growth in median salaries of at least that amount. The median salary of \$35,000 earned by master's degree recipients in journalism and mass communication was \$5,000 more in 1999 than in 1998.
- ❑ The benefits package received by journalism and mass communication graduates also improved in 1999 over a year earlier, but the overall rise in benefits is attributable mainly to increases in partially-paid benefits rather than fully-paid benefits.
- ❑ While job satisfaction remains relatively high, the commitment of journalism and mass communications graduates to communication organizations and careers has continued to erode. Less than one in five of the graduates say they expect to retire in their current occupation.

Graduate Survey Methodology

The *Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates* is designed to monitor the employment rates and salaries of graduates of journalism and mass communication programs in the United States, including Puerto Rico. In addition, the survey tracks the curricular activities of those graduates while in college, examines their job-seeking strategies, and provides measures of the professional attitudes and behaviors of the graduates upon completion of their college studies.

Since 1997, the *Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates* has been conducted at the Henry W. Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Georgia. From 1987-1996, the survey was conducted at The Ohio State University.

Each year a sample of schools is drawn from those listed in the *Journalism and Mass Communication Directory*, published annually by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, and *The Journalist's Road to Success: A Career and Scholarship Guide*, published each year by the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund, Inc. Schools list themselves in the *AEJMC Directory*. To be included in the *Guide*, the college or university must offer at least 10 courses in news-editorial 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. Selection of schools is probabilistic, so that those chosen represent the population of schools listed in the two directories. In 1999, 102 schools were drawn from the 456 unique entries of four-year programs in the U.S. (including Puerto Rico) in the two directories.

Administrators at the selected schools are asked to provide the names and addresses of their spring bachelor's and master's degree recipients. A questionnaire was mailed in November 1999 to all spring graduates receiving either a bachelor's or a master's degree from the selected programs. A second questionnaire was sent to nonrespondents in January 2000. A third mailing was sent in March 2000 to graduates who had not responded to the first two mailings. The questionnaire asked about the respondent's experiences both while a student and in the months since graduation. Included were questions about university experiences, job-seeking and employment, and salary and benefits.

In 1999, the survey was mailed to 6,613 individuals whose names and addresses were provided by the administrators of the 102 programs. A total of 3,134 returned the questionnaires by the end of May of 2000. Of the returns, 2,826 were from students who reported they actually had completed their degrees during the April to June 1999 period. The remaining 308 had completed their degrees either before or after the specified period, despite their inclusion in the spring graduation lists. A total of 447 questionnaires was returned undelivered and without a forwarding address. Return rate, computed as the number of questionnaires returned divided by the number mailed, was 47.4%. Return rate, computed as the number returned divided by the number mailed minus the bad addresses, was 50.8%. Of the 2,826 usable questionnaires, 2,679 (94.8%) were from bachelor's degree recipients and 147 were from those who received a master's degree.

The findings summarized in this report are projectable to the estimated 35,300 students who earned bachelor's degrees and the 3,000 students who earned master's degrees in academic year 1998-99 from the 456 colleges and universities across the United States and Puerto Rico offering programs in journalism and mass communication. Comparisons are made with data gathered in graduate surveys back through 1986. Data on master's degree recipients have been available since 1990.

Sample error for the 1999 undergraduate data is 1.9%. Sample error terms for earlier surveys were: 2.1% (1996-8), 2.0% (1990-1995), 2.1% (1989), 3.7% (1988), 2.8% (1987), and 3.2% (1986). In all cases, the confidence level is set at .05, meaning that the odds are 19 to one that the figures presented in this report are within plus or minus sample error of what would have been obtained had all graduates of journalism and mass communication programs, rather than a sample of these graduates, completed questionnaires. (Sample error, of course, is only one of the sources of error in survey estimates.) Sample error for responses from those receiving master's degrees in 1999 is 8.1%, nearly the same as in previous years for which data are available. In many instances in the report that follows, fewer than the full number of cases is used for inferences. For example, some of the data are based solely on persons working full-time when surveyed. In these cases, error is greater than 1.9%, depending on the actual number of persons for whom data are reported. In addition, many comparisons between subgroups in the sample and between the 1999 and earlier samples are made. Standard statistical tests have been used to evaluate the observed differences, or trends. Only those differences likely to hold if a census of all graduates were undertaken are discussed in the text.

Women made up 70.1% of respondents. Members of racial or ethnic minorities made up 17.1% of those returning questionnaires. These sample characteristics are similar to those in recent years and generally match the projections for graduates of the 456 schools from which the sample was drawn.

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Curricular Activities

The percentage of bachelor's degree recipients saying they specialized in advertising increased slightly in 1999 over a year earlier, reversing at last for now what has been a pattern of decline in the percentage of graduates from journalism and mass communication programs stating this as their speciality going back to the end of the 1980s (Chart 1). Advertising, of course, is taught in many programs not included in the population of the *Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Enrollments*. The percentage of students saying they specialized in public relations also increased in 1999 from a year earlier, bringing that figure back to its 1986 level. The percentage of students in broadcasting declined slightly, while the percentage of students in print journalism (news-editorial) remained the same. The percentage of students who said they had not specialized in one of these four areas of traditional journalism study declined by 3 percentage points in 1999 after a very sharp increase the year earlier.

Chart 1 shows relative student interests, not the actual number of students who said they had these specializations. A projection of the data in Chart 1 (produced by multiplying the shown percentages by the estimated 35,300 bachelor's degree recipients in 1998-99), indicates that about 6,000 graduates said they had a news editorial interest in 1999, compared with 6,750 in 1986, when about 31,000 students earned bachelor's degrees in journalism and mass communication. For advertising, the 4,150 graduates with this interest in 1999 is only 64% of 6,450 in 1986.

Students in journalism and mass communication programs remained committed to professional activities in support of media careers. Eight in ten of all bachelor's degree recipients reported having a media internship, and roughly a third reported working for the campus newspaper (Chart 2). However, with the single exception of professional magazine activities, participation in campus activities was down slightly from 1998, when participation had increased for most campus activities. The percentage drops in newspaper and radio station participation were the largest among the activities, at 3.1% and 4.4%, respectively. Somewhat surprisingly, level of participation with a "college World Wide Web site" remains low, at 3.4%. This no doubt underestimates real participation in Web activities, as many campus media also have their own Web operations.

Grade point averages reported by bachelor's degree recipients increased again in 1999, continuing a 10-year trend (Chart 3). Fewer graduates reported receiving a B grade, representing a drop of over 15 percentage points since 1990, and more students reported receiving an A grade, an increase of more than 10 percentage points since 1990. Percentage of students receiving a C grade was small, at less than 8%, but this percentage has risen almost 5 percentage points since 1996.

At least 30% of bachelor's degree recipients in all majors reported having an A average (Chart 4). Students in advertising and print journalism showed the largest increases in GPA. About 5% more graduates in print journalism reported having an A average than in 1998, while over 4% more graduates in advertising reported having an A average than in 1998. Consistent with recent history, print journalism

majors reported higher scores than all other specialties, and advertising majors reported the lowest scores, even with their substantial improvement in 1999.

Job Seeking Strategies

The 1999 journalism and mass communication bachelor's degree recipients, for the most part, sought jobs with traditional communication employers. While Chart 1 showed more graduates than in the past specialized in something other than the four traditional specializations, editorial journalism, broadcasting, advertising and public relations, 80.7% of graduates reported seeking jobs with at least one of the traditional employers of journalism and mass communication graduates. As in the past, graduates may seek alternative specializations in school but come back to traditional areas when seeking jobs.

Percentages of graduates who looked for work and sought jobs with daily and weekly newspapers, consumer magazines, book publishing, and other print publishing ventures held steady in 1999 compared with a year earlier (Chart 5).² The exception is for online or Internet publishing, which saw an increase from 10.3% in 1998 to 12.4% in 1999. The percentage has nearly doubled in only three years, from 1996 to 1999. Doubtless this growth reflects growth in the online industry as well as increasing student interest in this area. Because Web content is still mostly textual in nature, it is categorized here in the print area. Technological improvements may necessitate recategorizing this media type in the near future.

The percentages of students seeking jobs in key segments of the telecommunications industry was down slightly in 1999 (Chart 6) over a year earlier. Over the last ten years, however, these percentages have held largely steady, with the exception of radio, which has shown a generally steady decline of over six percentage points since 1990. The percentage of students seeking jobs in public relations and advertising has remained largely unchanged since 1996, and fluctuation has not been dramatic in these areas over the last 11 years (Chart 7).

Employment

Overall employment figures portray a rosy scenario for the graduates of journalism and mass communication programs that is basically unchanged from a year earlier. Continuing a trend that began at the end of the recession in 1991, more than eight of ten bachelor's degree recipients found themselves with at least one job offer upon graduation in 1999. The figure is basically unchanged from a year earlier. The mean number of job offers available to students upon graduation also was the same as a year earlier; this number is dramatically greater than in other years since 1988 (Chart 8).

Not all graduates accept or keep these early jobs, but six to eight months after graduation more than three-quarters of bachelor's degree recipients report holding a full-time job (Chart 9). This figure was not significantly higher than a year earlier, but employment has increased rather steadily since

²Graduates who did not seek work upon graduation were eliminated from Charts 5, 6 and 7.

1991. The percent of unemployed bachelor's degree recipients declined to 11%, which is the lowest rate since 1986, the year this measure was first taken in its present form. Just under 7% of graduates held part-time jobs, which was nearly the same as last year. The percentage of BA recipients returning to school also was the same as a year ago. The low percentages of those seeking part-time work and of those returning to school reflect the current favorable employment conditions, as fewer graduates in a strong economy seek part-time work or continue school.

Most of the jobs held by 1999 bachelor's degree recipients were considered to be permanent jobs, as opposed to short-term assignments or internships. More than 90% of full-time employees held positions offering permanent status – i.e., continuing employment (Chart 10). The percentage of part-time job holders reporting their positions as permanent declined to 44.8%, which is the lowest figure during the six years this question has been asked.

The figure of 11.0% unemployment from Chart 9 is likely an overestimation of unemployment for graduates of journalism and mass communication programs. This figure includes graduates who report returning to school as well as graduates who say they are not seeking work. The Bureau of Labor Statistics eliminates these individuals from its estimation of national unemployment, which stood at the historically low level of 4.1% in 1999.³ Chart 11 shows a revised calculation of unemployment for bachelor's degree recipients of journalism and mass communication programs, eliminating individuals returning to school and individuals not seeking work. The adjusted figure shows unemployment for graduates of journalism and mass communication bachelor's degree programs to be at 8%, a significant increase from the previous year, but still a fairly low level historically. This figure is nearly the same as the Bureau's calculations for unemployment among all 20-to-24-year-olds. The unemployment rate for bachelor's degree recipients in journalism and mass communication computed in this way has increased for the last two years, and while this is not enough evidence to declare an unsettling trend, it warrants a close watch.⁴

Labor market conditions for master's degree recipients of journalism and mass communication programs also were favorable in 1999. The percentage of graduates reporting at least one job offer upon graduation was roughly comparable to the percentage of bachelor's degree recipients (Chart 12). As in the case for bachelor's degree recipients, the employment rate for master's degree recipients was up from last year, to more than eight in 10 with full-time jobs (Chart 13). The estimates for the master's degree recipients are based on relatively small number of cases each year (147 in 1999), and so some

³The rates for the national data are the average seasonably adjusted monthly unemployment rates for the June of the year shown through the following May.

⁴The unemployment rates for journalism and mass communication graduates shown in this table also are different from those shown in previous tables in that no assumption has been made about missing responses to the question. In the previous tables, nonresponses were treated as unemployed.

instability in the statistics is expected. Doubtless, however, master's degree recipients are experiencing great success in the job market, as are bachelor's degree recipients.

Print journalism bachelor's degree recipients reported a full-time employment rate of 80.4% (Chart 14), almost six percentage points higher than the previous year, and higher than the overall full-time employment rate of 76.1% (the overall rate is shown in Chart 9). Broadcasting students reported a full-time employment rate that was lower than the overall rate (Chart 15), while the employment rates for both advertising (Chart 16) and public relations students (Chart 17) were above the overall rate. Full-time employment rates for advertising and public relations bachelor's degree recipients were down several percentage points from their peak last year, but still around eight out of 10 graduates from each specialty reported having full-time jobs, which is a higher rate than most of the last 11 years.

The percentage of bachelor's degree recipients working in the communication field six to eight months after graduation rose slightly in 1999 to 65.1%, while the percentage working in non-communication jobs held roughly steady at 17.8% (Chart 18). The gap between the percentage of bachelor's degree recipients holding communication jobs and the percentage holding non-communication jobs has been steadily widening since 1991, with the former increasing and the latter decreasing. Over that same period the percentage of unemployed and the percentage continuing school has also been decreasing.

About one in 10 bachelor's degree recipients reported the job assignment as writing and reporting (Chart 19). This surpassed the rates of other news-editorial tasks reported, and the rate was unchanged from 1998. Also unchanged is the percentage of graduates doing editing and page layout work. The percentage of graduates doing a combination of writing, reporting, editing and layout is up slightly from a year ago. If the trend continues, it would signal a decline in task differentiation in the communication workplace. The percentage of bachelor's degree recipients identifying their job tasks as ad production and ad placement held steady, as has been the case in recent years (Chart 20). The percentage identifying their job tasks as corporate communication showed little change from recent years, but the percentage reporting promotion and marketing has shown a pattern of growth since 1994 (Chart 21).

The percentage of students who took jobs with daily newspapers increased slightly in 1999 and is at its highest level in a decade (Chart 22). The percentage of students taking jobs with weeklies or wire services remained constant. The percentages of graduates taking jobs with a television station, a radio station and cable television also held constant (Chart 23). Broadcast television is the dominant employer among the three. The percentage of graduates going into public relations and advertising also has remained fairly constant (Chart 24). Percentages of students holding jobs in magazines, newsletters and trade publishing, and book publishing held constant at around 1% each (Chart 25).

The number of bachelor's degree recipients taking jobs in online or Internet publishing continues to be small, but the growth over a year ago is rather pronounced. In 1999, an estimated 700 students

took jobs in online or Internet publishing, representing 2.0% of the graduates (Chart 25). In 1998, the number was 365. More graduates in 1999 went to online or Internet publishing jobs than took jobs in such traditional employers as wire services, corporate advertising departments, consumer magazines and book publishing. The number equals the number taking jobs in radio and cable television as well as in newsletters and trade publications. Clearly the popularity of Web publishing is on the rise, and these employers are competing successfully for journalism and mass communication graduates in a tight labor market.

As Chart 26 shows, a higher percentage of graduates from news-editorial programs taking jobs with newspapers and wire services has continued its growth. In fact, the figure is higher than during any year going back to 1988. More than four in 10 of the graduates of news editorial programs took newspaper jobs. In 1993, only 26.8% of these graduates took jobs with newspapers and wire services. The percentage of broadcasting graduates taking jobs in the broadcasting field also climbed, to over 38%, which continues an upward trend from 1992 (Chart 27). The percentage of advertising graduates taking jobs in advertising decreased slightly (Chart 28), while the percentage of public relations graduates taking jobs in their field held steady (Chart 29). Among all the specialties, public relations and advertising graduates were most likely to pursue communications jobs outside their fields. More than twice the percentage of public relations graduates choosing a public relations job chose a communication jobs outside public relations.

For more than a decade, the *Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates* has shown a gap in the employment levels of bachelor's degree recipients who are members of racial and ethnic minorities and those who are not, with the minorities having more difficulty finding jobs upon graduation. The gap actually increased in size until 1998 when it closed noticeably—though not completely. This gap opened up again in 1999, to 5.3% (Chart 30). The gap increases to 7% if individuals who are going back to school are included in the calculations. This larger percentage may be more reflective of the job-finding difficulty experienced by minorities, as returning to school is often an indicant of job-search failure. Clearly minorities are continuing to experience a more difficult labor market than are nonminority graduates.

In contrast to the situation for minority graduates, over the last 10 years, female bachelor's degree recipients have had slightly more success than men in the job market than male graduates. This gap narrowed considerably in 1999, with full-time employment for females dipping slightly to 81.3% and full-time employment for men increasing to 80.4% (Chart 31).

As documented in Charts 5, 6 and 7, graduates seek jobs in different segments of the industry, and not all graduates seek jobs in the fields of mass communication even though they earned degrees in the area. Chart 32 summarizes the data on where graduates seek jobs, but in this chart, unlike in the earlier ones, those graduates who had not started looking for jobs at all six to eight months after graduation (about 10%) were included in the base percentages. From this chart, then, it is possible to

project to an actual number of 1999 bachelor's degree recipients who looked for a job in a selected industry segment.

The chart makes it clear that five types of jobs are sought most extensively by those who receive their bachelor's degrees from journalism and mass communication programs: with daily newspapers, in broadcast television, with public relations agencies, with advertising departments, and in public relations departments of companies or other organizations. A projected 6,810 graduates sought a job with a daily newspaper.⁵ For television, the projected number of job seekers was 7,340. An estimated 2,400 sought jobs in the consumer magazine industry. Web jobs were sought by an estimated 3,950 of the graduates.

Charts 33 and 34 extend this analysis to compare where minority graduates seek work in comparison with where nonminority graduates seek work. The chart also shows projections for actual numbers of graduates involved. Minority graduates are much like nonminority graduates in their jobs seeking strategies, excepting that they have a slight preference for jobs in television. They certainly are no less likely to seek jobs in daily newspapers, or, for that matter, in Web publishing. An estimated 1,310 minority graduates sought daily newspaper jobs in 1999, and an estimated 1,480 sought television jobs.

The disparities in job seeking were greater between male and female graduates (Chart 35 and Chart 36) than between minority and non-minority graduates. The most conspicuous differences were in job searching for advertising and public relations positions and in job searching for telecommunications positions. For example, almost a quarter of female bachelor's degree recipients sought work with PR agencies as opposed to 15.3% of men, while more than a quarter of the men sought work in television as opposed to 18.6% of women. There was also a large disparity in job hunting for online publishing positions, with 15.2% of men and 9.5% of women looking for online jobs (Chart 36). Gender seems to be at least a partial explainer of graduates' job-seeking choices.

These charts tell something about job seeking in the current tight labor market for minorities and nonminorities and for women and men. The data in Chart 32, for example, viewed in the context of the data in Charts 22 to 25, show that a relatively high ratio of graduates who sought work in the daily newspaper industry (19.3%) actually worked in the daily newspaper industry when they completed the interview (7.2% in Chart 22). For television, the ratio is roughly comparable with 20.8% seeking and 7.4% having a job (Chart 23). For Web jobs, in contrast, 11.2% of the graduates sought jobs, while only 2% actually had them when they completed the interview (Chart 25). The number of students getting web jobs is increasing, but many more are looking than actually getting or taking them.

Salaries and Benefits

⁵About 2,540 actually were working in a daily newspaper job six to eight months after graduation. This estimate is based on the estimate that 35,300 students graduated from journalism and mass communication programs and 7.2% of them were working at daily newspapers (Chart 22).

Salaries paid to graduates of journalism and mass communication programs increased again in 1999, offering real growth in purchasing power to those entering the field (Chart 37). In unadjusted dollars, salaries for bachelor's degree recipients increased by \$1,000, representing the third straight year of growth in median salaries of at least that amount. In dollars adjusted for inflation, that increase was smaller but noticeable nonetheless.⁶ The median salary of \$25,000 earned by 1999's graduates was the highest recorded going back to at least 1986 and stood at \$15,700 in 1985 dollars.

The median salary earned by master's degree recipients in journalism and mass communication was \$5,000 more in 1999 than in 1998. The median salary for these graduates was \$35,000 in 1999 dollars, or \$10,000 more than the average bachelor's degree salary.

Salaries received by journalism and mass communication bachelor's degree recipients increased at jobs in all the major specialties except for advertising and public relations. Both nominal and adjusted salaries at daily newspapers increased dramatically in 1999, and the adjusted median salary stands at its highest level in the past 14 years – at \$15,700 in 1985 dollars (Chart 38). The nominal median salary for daily newspapers in 1999 was \$24,960, compared with \$22,600 reported by graduates a year earlier! Weekly newspaper salaries, low when compared to salaries received at dailies, also increased at a rate above inflation (Chart 39). Salaries for radio and television were both up from last year, and they rose at rates above inflation (Charts 40, 41). Nominal median salaries in the advertising and public relations fields held steady, meaning that inflation-adjusted salaries actually declined from the previous year (Charts 42, 43). Salaries in both of these fields, however, remain high.

Chart 44 shows a comparison of salaries among major communication job types. As was the case in 1998, jobs in Web publishing paid the best. The median salary reported by the 52 bachelor's degree recipients in the sample who took jobs in online publishing (last year 24 reported) was \$28,000, or \$3,000 higher than the median salary for all bachelor's degree recipients. This median salary in Web publishing, however, was down \$2,000 from 1998. Consumer magazine median salaries were second highest, at \$26,494. Salaries for jobs with newsletters/trade publications, daily newspaper jobs and advertising and public relations jobs were all at or above the median salary for all positions. As has traditionally been the case, television salaries were the lowest among all job types in 1999. The median salary for television was \$19,968, more than \$5,000 below the overall median. Cable television offered the highest median salary among all telecommunications jobs, but even its salary level was \$2,000 below the overall median. (Detailed salary data are shown in Appendix Table 1.)

Chart 45 shows a breakdown of median annual salaries by regions of the country. In order to gather this data, graduates were asked to report the first three digits of their zip code for their place of employment. Zip codes were recoded into states and then, to produce more stable estimates, into regions. Differences in median annual salaries among the regions were small. The Northeast had the

⁶Inflation stood at 3.1%, based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Areas.

highest median salary, and the Midwest had the lowest, but the difference between these extremes was only a little more than \$1,500.

The percentage of bachelor's degree recipients having various types of benefits at least partially paid by their employers increased for almost all benefit types in 1999. Only the percentage receiving child-care benefits, which had been increasing steadily since 1992, declined slightly or held steady. The overall rise in benefits across the board is attributable mainly to increases in partially-paid benefits rather than fully-paid benefits. All types of partially-paid benefits except for child-care benefits increased, while the percentage receiving fully-paid benefits for six out of the nine types of benefits measured decreased or remained the same in 1999 (Charts 46-48).

Child-care benefits are by far the most infrequently reported benefits, as less than a quarter of bachelor's degree recipients say they receive either wholly-paid or partly-paid benefits of this type (Chart 48). However almost three-quarters reported having maternity/paternity leave as a benefit in 1999, which is a substantial increase over the previous year (Chart 48). The most frequently reported benefit was basic medical insurance, as more than eight out of ten reported having this benefit either partly or wholly paid by their employers. Eight out of ten reported having partly or wholly paid major medical insurance, followed by prescription drug benefits at just less than 80% and dental benefits at just under 75% (Charts 46, 47).

As has been the case in recent years, about one in four bachelor's degree recipients with full-time jobs reported being expected to work overtime with no compensation (Chart 49). For the first time, answers for this question can be broken down by whether individuals were paid hourly, which was true for just over one-third of respondents, or paid the same regardless of hours worked, which was the case for nearly two-thirds of respondents (Chart 50). Among those bachelor's degree recipients working on an hourly basis, 3.4% reported working more than 40 hours per week without reimbursement. For bachelor's degree recipients who were paid the same amount regardless of hours worked, 38.3% reported working more than 40 hours per week without overtime compensation (Chart 51).

This breakdown helps explain variability in employees working overtime without reimbursement among the various job specialties, as shown in Chart 52. Employees for public relations and advertising firms more frequently report working overtime without compensation than do employees in the newspaper, broadcasting and non-communication industries. The explanation for this may be seen in Chart 53, which shows that most individuals working with the newspaper and broadcasting industries are hourly employees, and most individuals working in public relations and advertising are salaried employees. As Chart 51 shows, relatively few employees working on an hourly basis report working overtime without getting paid.

Attitudes Toward Work

In 1999, the majority of graduates reported that they had selected a job because it let them do what they wanted to do, and relatively small number reported they took the job because it was the only

one available to them (Chart 54). The latter percentage has declined dramatically since 1993, while the former has generally grown since that time. The percent reporting job selection because of job availability was 17.7% in 1999. While the percent reporting selecting jobs because the jobs were what they wanted to do declined this year, the decline was slight, and the percentage was still more than 60%.

Chart 55 displays a laundry list of reasons for selecting jobs. Bachelor's degree recipients tended to embrace the more intangible explanations for job choice. As mentioned, more than six of 10 graduates chose a job because it was what they wanted to do. Similarly, over half said they chose jobs because they felt they had talent in that area. Graduates also said they chose jobs that provided opportunities for learning and advancement, and they pursued jobs that provided challenge and variety. Less important were the more tangible, concrete reasons, such as salary, benefits, flexibility of schedule, technology used and location.

Having chosen a job, graduates said they were reasonably happy in their work. More than a third of the bachelor's degree recipients who were employed full-time reported being very satisfied with their current working conditions—nearly the same ratio as a year earlier (Chart 56). Less than one out of 10 part-time workers said they were very satisfied with their jobs.

Just more than a quarter of bachelor's degree recipients said they wished they had selected another career (Chart 57), which is slightly less than last year's figure. Another 4.2% said they never intended to go into a communication field, although they had selected that major. This percentage is also down slightly from last year. Graduates who reported wishing they had chosen another career were asked to respond to a list of possible reasons. In contrast to the reasons for selecting jobs, graduates tended to give most prominence to tangible, concrete reasons for wanting another career, such as salary, difficulty finding a job and working schedule (Chart 58). Almost seven out of 10 graduates listed low salary as a reason for finding another career, and over half listed difficulty finding a job as a reason. Intangible reasons such as poor opportunity for advancement, and lack of interest in the work were considered low in importance.

More than eight in 10 bachelor's degree recipients reported that their employer provided a realistic view of job demands and an explanation of job expectations (Chart 59). Approximately seven out of ten said employers gave them on-the-job supervision and assistance meeting job demands. Just over half said their employer provided an orientation session. By and large, there is little change in responses to these questions from a year earlier.

Attitudes toward work reported by bachelor's degree recipients reflected their high level of job satisfaction. Almost three-quarters of graduates said their job was interesting, and more than six out of 10 said their job met expectations, was challenging and allowed an active social life (Chart 60). Fewer than four in 10 said their job provided an opportunity to raise a family, but this response may reflect respondents' early stations in life more than the characteristics of the job itself.

While job satisfaction is relatively high, bachelor's degree recipients' commitment to communication organizations and careers has been steadily eroding since 1997, when this question was first included in the instrument. As Chart 61 shows, less than one in five graduates say they expect to retire in their current occupation, while only 4.1% say they expect to retire with the company for which they are presently working.

Concluding Comments

As was the case last year, the news is mostly good for those seeking work in journalism and mass communication fields. Employment rates for both bachelor's degree and master's degree recipients are high, and that is the case regardless of job specialty. The percent of bachelor's and master's degree recipients receiving at least one job offer upon graduation climbed to above 80%. Somewhat unexpectedly however, graduates of journalism and mass communication, for the first time in a decade, are experiencing unemployment rates equal to that of the 20-to-24-year-old segment of the U.S. labor force. This is the second year the unemployment rate for journalism and mass communication graduates has climbed while U.S. labor force rates have dropped. This is a situation worth watching, but not one that seems very dire given the overall favorable context.

Salaries continued to rise in almost all specialties, which is most likely due to the tight labor market. Salaries, however, may not be increasing enough, according to graduates. Almost thirty percent of bachelor's degree recipients said they wished they had chosen a career other than the communication position they held, and out of this group, almost seven out of 10 cited low salaries as the reason. Meanwhile commitment to media organizations and media occupations continues to decline. This is an alarming trend, especially given the high availability of jobs in the current market.

The salaries reported in journalism and mass communication clearly still are not good. Starting salaries were expected to increase from between 3% and 5% for 1998-99 graduates in most majors, according to the Collegiate Employment Research Institute at Michigan State University, which surveys those expecting to hire college graduates each year (www.csp.msu.edu/cei/index.html). The rate of increase of 4.2% for journalism and mass communication bachelor's degree recipients falls in the middle of that range. The National Association of Colleges and Employers, based on reports from college and university career services offices nationwide, reported that the average liberal arts graduate earned \$27,664 in 1999—or more than \$2,500 above the median salary reported by journalism and mass communication bachelor's degree recipients (www.nacweb.org/NACE). Journalism and mass communication salaries are going to have to show above average increases to catch up with what other liberal arts graduates earn. Graduates with technical skills, particularly in the computer area, make considerably more.

An increasingly popular area for journalism and mass communication graduates is online publishing. The percentage of graduates seeking jobs in Web work has almost doubled since 1996, and it would be surprising if an upward trend did not continue into the foreseeable future. More than one in

10 of all bachelor's degree recipients have chosen jobs in online publishing, which is more than the percentages choosing radio jobs and consumer magazine jobs, and comparable to the percentage choosing work with weekly papers. The median level for Web salaries has reflected this trend, standing at \$28,000, which is well above all other communication job salary medians. This level, however, is down \$2,000 from last year, indicating that the initial fever may be coming to an end, and salaries may be coming back into line with those for other communication jobs. However, this salary decrease may not necessarily portend an impending decrease in the percentages seeking and choosing Web work, given that relatively few bachelor's degree recipients cite salary as a reason for choosing jobs.

It is somewhat surprising that so few graduates have reported working with campus Web sites. This may be explained by the decentralized nature of campus online work. Online media work may be performed by single individuals and does not have to take place in an organizational setting. Also graduates may be reporting their campus Web work as newspaper or television work if their online media are associated with these more established campus institutions. It may also be that structured campus Web site opportunities are simply not available yet at many schools.

The ratio between percentages of bachelor's degree recipients seeking jobs and taking jobs is higher for online publishing work than for newspapers and television, but it is much higher for public relations and advertising positions. These positions appear to be the most difficult to get. Also interesting is the high popularity of television jobs. The percentage seeking these jobs is down somewhat from last year, but historically, these jobs are among the most highly demanded. Yet salaries in broadcast television are the lowest among all communications specialties, and benefit levels are consistently lower than newspapers, cable, public relations, advertising and non-media positions. Findings show that overall, those seeking communications jobs rank the intangible reasons (e.g., not salary, benefits or location) for taking jobs as most important, and television appears to be an extreme example of this finding.

A significant change from last year's report was the increase in median salaries for master's degree recipients. Even in dollars adjusted for inflation the median salary jumped \$2,600, compared to only \$200 for bachelor's degree recipients. This is a one-year jump, and it would be rash to declare a trend – the difference between bachelor's degree recipient salaries and master's degree recipient salaries has been fairly constant since 1990, the first year salaries were analyzed separately for these two groups.

Since 1991 graduates of journalism and mass communication have been taking communication jobs at an increasingly greater rate than they have been taking non-communication jobs. The gap has steadily widened from 22.1% in 1991 to 47.3% in 1999. This trend is likely attributable to growth in communication jobs rather than to the structure of communication programs. In fact students are far more likely to pursue non-traditional communication specialties in school than any of the traditional "big four" specialties (newspapers, telecommunication, advertising and public relations). It is also unlikely

that this trend of graduates taking communication jobs is due to greater commitment by graduates to communication occupations. As mentioned, graduates in 1999 report a steadily decreasing level of commitment to the communication occupations they have chosen and to the communication organizations with which they presently work.

Last year the gap between minority and non-minority hiring narrowed considerably, but this gap has opened up again somewhat. Given the growing employment gap from 1991 to 1997, this finding is of considerable importance. It is also apparent that more minorities than non-minorities are seeking jobs in communication specialties offering lower salaries, such as television, radio and newspapers. A substantially larger percentage of minorities than non-minorities seek television jobs, which pay the lowest among the major communication specialties, at a median salary level under \$20,000. Higher paying specialties like magazines, trade publications and newsletters are more likely to be sought by non-minorities.

The small gap between male and female employment narrowed in 1999, with female employment decreasing slightly and male employment increasing. A great disparity exists between the types of jobs male and female bachelor's degree recipients are likely to seek. Male graduates are far more likely to pursue telecommunication, newspaper and Web positions than female graduates, while female graduates are much more likely to pursue positions in advertising and public relations.

It also appears that advertising and public relations organizations are much more likely to offer jobs paid on a salary basis than are newspapers and telecommunications companies, and that employees in these positions are more likely to work overtime without compensation. It may be therefore that female bachelor's degree recipients are more likely to end up in work structures more conducive to unpaid overtime than are male degree recipients.

Participating Schools

The following 102 schools participated in the 1999 Annual Survey of Journalism & Mass Communication Graduates:

Alabama State University (AL)	Loras College (IA)
University of South Alabama (AL)	University of Iowa (IA)
University of Alaska Fairbanks (AK)	Wichita State University (KS)
Arizona State University (AZ)	Eastern Kentucky University (KY)
Arkansas State University (AR)	Union College (KY)
Ouachita Baptist University (AR)	University of Kentucky (KY)
Azusa Pacific University (CA)	University of Louisiana at Monroe (LA)
California State University Fullerton (CA)	Northwestern State U. of Louisiana (LA)
California State University Long Beach (CA)	Southeastern Louisiana University (LA)
Humboldt State University (CA)	University of Maryland (MD)
San Jose State University (CA)	Emerson College (MA)
Santa Clara University (CA)	University of Massachusetts (MA)
University of Northern Colorado (CO)	Michigan State University (MI)
University of Southern Colorado (CO)	Oakland University (MI)
University of Bridgeport (CT)	University of Minnesota (MN)
University of Delaware (DE)	University of St. Thomas (MN)
Florida A & M University (FL)	Rust College (MS)
University of Florida (FL)	University of Mississippi (MS)
Berry College (GA)	Central Missouri State University (MO)
Clark Atlanta University (GA)	Lincoln University (MO)
University of Georgia (GA)	University of Missouri Columbia (MO)
University of Hawaii at Manoa (HI)	University of Missouri Kansas City (MO)
University of Idaho (ID)	Evangel University (MO)
Columbia College Chicago (IL)	University of Montana (MT)
Northern Illinois University (IL)	Hastings College (NE)
Northwestern University (IL)	University of New Hampshire (NH)
Southern Illinois University (IL)	Rider University (NJ)
Indiana University (IN)	University of New Mexico (NM)
Purdue University (IN)	Ithaca College (NY)
University of Southern Indiana (IN)	Long Island University Brooklyn Campus (NY)
Taylor University Fort Wayne (IN)	New York University (NY)

St. Bonaventure University (NY)
Syracuse University (NY)
State University of New York Albany (NY)
Elon College (NC)
Lenoir-Rhyne College (NC)
University of North Carolina at Pembroke (NC)
Franciscan University of Steubenville (OH)
Ohio University (OH)
Ohio State University (OH)
Youngstown State University (OH)
Oklahoma State University (OK)
University of Oklahoma (OK)
Southern Oregon University (OR)
University of Oregon (OR)
Indiana University of Pennsylvania (PA)
Elizabethtown College (PA)
LaSalle University (PA)
University of Scranton (PA)
University of South Carolina (SC)
Black Hills State University (SD)
Tennessee Technological University (TN)
University of Tennessee--Martin (TN)
Stephen F. Austin State University (TX)
Texas Wesleyan University (TX)
Texas A & M University (TX)
Texas Christian University (TX)
Lamar University (TX)
Brigham Young University (UT)
Castleton State College (VT)
James Madison University (VA)
Regent University (VA)
Virginia Union University (VA)
Eastern Washington University (WA)
University of Washington (WA)
Bethany College (WV)
Marquette University (WI)
University of Wisconsin--Milwaukee (WI)
University of Wisconsin--Stevens Point (WI)
Howard University (DC)
University of Puerto Rico (PR)