

Report advocates change

By Julie Shippen
Of the Emerald

The nation's journalism schools must begin teaching students about the social impact of modern communication technology and must place more emphasis on continuing education, especially for mid-career professionals, a new University report concludes.

The report, which recommends seven major areas of change, is the result of the University journalism school's two-year study on the future of journalism and mass communication education.

The study was funded by a \$70,000 grant from the Gannett Foundation of Rochester, N.Y. and by a \$16,000 grant from the Northwest Area Foundation of St. Paul, Minn.

"The study was initiated for the explicit purpose of curriculum revision at the University of Oregon," journalism Dean Everette Dennis said. "What we did, we did for ourselves. However, even before the report was issued, it was widely discussed in professional and trade publications," Dennis said.

The University journalism faculty already has adopted some of the study's recommendations and is considering others, Dennis said.

And according to the May issue of *Presstime* magazine, several universities already are reshaping their courses of study along lines developed in the University project.

"This was the first systematic study that involved virtually all the nation's journalism schools," Dennis said. "We surveyed deans and selected faculty members at the schools, plus media critics and industry leaders."

Dennis said the leadership of every major media organization responded to a survey used in the study. These included the American Newspaper Publishers Association, the Public Relations Society of America and the Society of Professional Journalists.

As part of the study, a summit meeting of education and industry leaders was held in Eugene in January to discuss future directions. The report is seen as a comprehensive analysis of mass communication education.

"The general state of journalism and mass communication is dismal. It is a field grossly underfunded, even when compared with other university departments," the report states. It adds, however, that American journalism schools are the "the best of their kind in the world and the envy of other countries and press systems."

"Although most people agree that understanding mass communication is essential to understanding modern society, few American universities act as though this is the case," Dennis said.

The report urges university administrators to make the study of mass communication


more central to university education and urges journalism schools to provide more mass communication courses to non-majors.

Finally, the report concludes that the field needs a national strategic plan "if it is to escape its present state and begin to take its rightful place in American higher education. Knowing and understanding the mass media in American society are critical needs for all citizens and especially for those who will staff and direct the communication professions."

The report includes a model curriculum, an in-depth look at teaching communication technology, a section on the economics of journalism education and a self-study of the Oregon program.

"The nation's journalism schools are uniquely suited to guide the education of the new information worker, and our report indicates how this is being done across the country,"

*Dennis said.



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Minors Continued from Page 3

"major commitment" to Oregon's economic development.

The University's efforts to fulfill this commitment would be enhanced by the second priority item on the list of requests, which is the initiation of a graduate-level teaching and research program in international business.

According to a May 23 memorandum by Richard Steers, College of Business Administration associate dean, this proposal represents a "major plank" in the college's strategic plan.

Steers stated that the proposal has received strong campus-wide support and has elicited a "significant cooperative arrangement" between the colleges of Business Administration and Arts and Sciences. He also stated that the college has begun contacts with international-business staff at Portland State University, with both schools agreeing to work together on academic and outreach programs.

In addition, Steers said the college has enlisted the aid of Northwest business leaders in developing the proposal. The college also has been in contact with leading universities in Asia, Europe and the Middle East and has discussed exchanges of students and faculty with those institutions.

The program request asks for nearly \$882,000 in state funds through 1987. Steers said the college also has applied for a \$31,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education to support international-export development. The college also plans to begin a \$5 million endowment campaign once the program is underway.

Olum also requested state funding for a new instructional program leading to a major and a minor in American Studies. He also made requests for improvements in the Labor Education and Research outreach program, the Honors College, and the Humanities Center, among others.

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