

**DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION
WINTHROP UNIVERSITY**

Long-Range Diversity Plan
(adopted October 2018)

The Winthrop University Department of Mass Communication is committed to fostering student understanding of the issues of diversity and minority perspectives as essential to higher education and the practice of journalism and mass communication. Winthrop's department and coursework emphasize that the ethics and inclusiveness of mass communication professions require an ongoing effort to provide platforms from which voices, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or religious and political thought, can be represented and reported upon.

Our definition of diversity is adapted from our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement: The Department of Mass Communication defines diversity as a climate that involves and empowers diverse populations of faculty, staff and student body with varying characteristics, including racial and ethnic minorities, international communities, women, the elderly, persons with physical or mental disabilities, sexual orientation or identifications, political thought and religious beliefs. In accordance with this definition, the department is committed to the continuing development and retention of diverse student and faculty populations, and to maintaining a supportive climate for learning among faculty, students and staff who are diverse.-In alignment with these goals, the department has updated and modified its diversity policies and procedures and maintains an ongoing vigilance to meet high standards of inclusion.

Winthrop University, as a former all-female institution that now has a student population that is 68.9 percent female, 41.9 percent minority and 1.4 percent international (2019-2020 enrollment), is noted for its commitment to diversity and has embraced global learning skills as a core university competency delivered through a general education Global Learning Initiative and new initiatives in various programs of study. The university has attempted to recruit students reflecting the racial and ethnic makeup of neighboring high school classes in South Carolina, as well as to recruit students from multicultural backgrounds outside of the state. Once students are enrolled, retention efforts are maintained through individual mentoring, tutoring and general education courses such as ACAD 101, an academic success center, a human experience class, HMXP 102, and the TRiO Achievers Program, which supports first-generation students to increase academic performance, retention rates and graduation rates.

DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION
DIVERSITY OBJECTIVES

1. To maintain a welcoming campus climate and to strive for and maintain a civil, respectful, efficient and positive workforce.

2. To recruit and retain a diverse student body.

3. To recruit and retain a diverse workforce and maintain a diverse leadership and management.

4. To continue to refine a curriculum that reflects university and college values on diversity and inclusiveness.

5. To coordinate with university-level efforts to support diversity goals.

A number of diversity actions are outlined for each objective to plan and implement necessary activities to meet diversity needs.

To maintain a welcoming campus climate and to strive for and maintain a civil, respectful, efficient and positive workforce.

Actions

- Include questions on the Senior Exit Survey asking students to rate the climate within the department, as it relates to harassment and discrimination, such as asking whether students felt safe sharing their views and if assignments aligned with their abilities. Faculty will also draft and adopt a statement to be included on all syllabi, with information on reporting options and resources, which mirror the university's non-discrimination and anti-harassment statement. To be complete by 2021-22.
- Update the Alumni Survey to reflect questions added to Senior Exit Survey (2020-21), as they relate to diversity, equity and inclusion. Some of these may include:
 - How much do you agree with this statement? "Overall, the department provides a positive educational setting."
 - How much has the experience in your major contributed to your ability to understand people of other backgrounds (economic, racial/ethnic, political, religious, nationality, etc.)
 - To what extent has your academic program helped you become aware of the global interconnectedness of media and audiences? To be complete by fall 2021.
- Continue developing student activities to encourage diverse perspectives. Students will have opportunities to engage with individuals of various perspectives at department sponsored events such as the Native American film festivals (2017) or the Media Literacy Series (2018-2019), which provided audiences with a platform to discuss the relationship between race and power within news media practices – a discussion led by two award-winning journalists, including African American columnist Mary C. Curtis. Curtis contributes regularly on news outlets like NBC News and the Washington Post. She was chosen to be included in The HistoryMakers – a large archive documenting the successes of the African American community and historic movements. We will continue to plan more events that encourage an exchange between

individuals of unique backgrounds and perspectives. Prior goals included strengthening ties to the Charlotte Area Association of Black Journalists and the National Association of Black Journalists. This goal was reached in 2019 when Winthrop University's student chapter of NABJ was recognized as chapter of the year by NABJ. This win was awarded for organizing multiple events, from an interactive boot-camp for aspiring journalists to media-mixers with professionals. Additionally, we will continue to encourage student involvement in the Roddey-McMillan Record, the campus multicultural newspaper. We will also encourage participation in job fairs such as the Howard University job fair and the South Carolina Broadcasters Association in Columbia, S.C. We made headway on reaching this goal in 2019 thanks to a faculty member who provided transportation to and from the SCBA job fair so that four female minorities could attend.

- Ensure an equitable learning environment. To ensure that students with disabilities get equal access to the radio station, the control room was placed on the first floor of the studio. The department will continue to upgrade equipment classrooms and facilities to include special tables, access and equipment for students with disabilities. Additionally, all syllabi contain a "Students with Disabilities" statement that affirms our commitment to educational equity and notes available resources and accommodations that may be necessary.
- Encourage minority scholarship applications, internships and travel to minority conferences through mentoring and advising; post opportunities and resources on the departmental website (Spring 2020); apply for funding for travel reimbursement through the NABJ; and continue to promote students' applications for internships aimed at minority students, including the Multicultural Advertising internship program.
- Internships or practicums are now required of all MCOM majors, thereby ensuring that minority students obtain a professional experience, often involving minority supervisors.
- The faculty continues to encourage minority students to enroll in the McNair Scholar's program, which supports undergraduate research. Three department faculty members served as McNair Scholar's mentors 2015-2020.
- Additionally, in recent years at least three students have won scholarships from the Charlotte Area Association of Black Journalists and another student won an award through the National Association of Black Journalists. The department will continue to encourage minority students to apply for travel funding to conferences from NABJ. The Multicultural Advertising internship program is a national internship program for minority students supported by the American Association of Advertising Agencies. The department continues to encourage and assist students in the application process. Additionally, the department awards the Larry Timbs minority diversity scholarship award to one student, usually each spring, to promote excellence among minority students.
- Encourage study abroad for students and continue to attract an international student population. The faculty has planned and attempted several trips abroad including excursions to Cuba, Italy and Spain. The departmental internship coordinator additionally efforted a study abroad program in Kenya – the first partnership with an African nation; however, this has not been realized.
- We will continue efforts to attract international students, as this is an area for growth. Proposed ideas encouraging more student involvement include:
 - Forming a diverse committee of MCOM, IMCO and DIFD students that would create and enact a strategy to promote global learning, including a poll to determine where students would like to travel.

- Using MCOM week to feature a panel of students that can share their experiences studying abroad (or short-term trips).

[Update]: Students created a newsletter – Volume 20, issue 1 – featured on the homepage, encouraging study abroad experiences with a multipage layout of an IMCO student’s trip to Seville, Spain.]

- Encourage remaining faculty to take “Safe Zone” training for disability and LGBT issues to promote inclusiveness and maintain a welcoming environment. All faculty members except one completed the “safe zone” training; that faculty member left Winthrop spring 2020. Every effort will be made to ensure that all new hires complete the training.
- The mass communication website is being redesigned and includes a “Commitment to Diversity, Equity and inclusion” statement:

The Department of Mass Communication is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion in order to foster a mutually respectful environment so all may thrive and succeed. Diversity in conception and creation of media content includes the accurate portrayals of racial and ethnic minorities, international communities, women, the elderly, persons with physical or mental disabilities, sexual orientation, political thought and religious beliefs.

- The department authorized a “diversity” [page](#) that includes posting a listing of faculty research topics as related to diversity. [Update: This page was created on the MCOM website (Summer 2021), which includes links for student resources.]
- The department created and maintains another website, winthropdmc.com, to feature student work such as [e-portfolios](#).
- Instructors tasked the students that operate the school’s newscast “[Winthrop Close Up](#)” to create a website (Fall, 2019), featuring broadcast stories dealing with a variety of issues including minority concerns and underrepresented points of view. [Update: A [link](#) to this site will be posted on the department’s website Fall 2021.]
- Continue to post student accomplishments to Twitter and promote events sponsored by student organizations, such as WUABJ and AWC
- Continue to feature an internship wall showing internship placement

To recruit and retain a diverse student body.

Underrepresented groups within the student body in the department include Native American, Asian and Hispanic and Latinx populations.

Actions

- Continue to actively recruit minority high school students by participating in a college sponsored outreach program (starting Fall 2019), in which faculty, students and/or alumni visit regional high schools to form relationships with teachers and students. The department continues to maintain an annual high school media workshop and is considering adding a ½ day boot camp for high school students.

- Create additional outreach to area Hispanic and Native American populations. The department twice hosted a Native American film festival to explain the plight of the Native American people and celebrate their culture. Faculty will work to identify local Hispanic communities for an outreach program in 2021-22.
- Organize more events to promote diversity and cultural awareness
[UPDATE: The department co-organized a film screening with the City of Rock Hill to observe Racial Equality Month (Fall 2020), featuring the work of Winthrop students, such as videos and poems on diversity. The event was canceled due to weather, but attempts will be made to reorganize.]
- Continue partnership with the French ISCOM program that attracts French students each year. Continue to promote international and study abroad opportunities including partnerships in Dublin, Ireland, Jonkoping, Sweden, Agder, Norway and Deakin, and Australia. The department continues to partner with the ESICAD program each year and promote study abroad opportunities for students. There is also a push for students to fulfill their internship requirement abroad in order to immerse students in both social and business culture.
- Retain students by forming professional relationships in the media industry to provide minority internships and practicums. The department has formed relationships within the Multicultural Advertising Internship Program – a non-profit organization to prepare minority youth for careers in the media industry. The faculty begins identifying promising minority students in their freshman year to participate in the three-year continuous internship program. During the time under review, faculty guided six students through the application process. We will also continue to encourage students to develop relationships with media professionals through the Charlotte Area Association of Black Journalists. In addition, we will maintain the Larry Timbs minority diversity scholarship.
- Foster networking by hosting an alumni luncheon (Fall 2018) with a dozen media professionals including four minorities, as well as a speed-networking event (Spring 2019) with 19 sports media professionals, including minorities.

To recruit and retain a diverse workforce and maintain a diverse leadership and management.

Actions

- Actively recruit faculty members of color and women through personal contacts and advertising job postings through academic and professional organizations. Attend the Compact for Faculty Diversity Conference held every year in Northern Virginia. Two members of the mass communication faculty joined the College of Arts and Sciences Diversity and Inclusion committee to ensure fairness in hiring practices for women and minority candidates (2016-2020). During the job search for a new IMCO faculty member, search committee members offered the position to a female, a male from Bangladesh and a male from Nigeria. The male from Nigeria accepted. During the search for a MCOM faculty member, a female was invited for a campus interview, but she declined. A white male accepted the offer. The department also shows diversity among adjunct faculty with three females, one of which is black. Faculty will continue efforts to attend the Compact for Faculty Diversity Conference.

- Solicit information about prospective women or minority Ph.D. candidates or faculty based on personal connections with colleagues at other universities. Faculty reached out to colleagues at other universities to recruit prospective female and minority candidates during both job searches (IMCO and MCOM). Job announcements were posted on university listservs, including HCBU's, and were sent to members of the Broadcast, Minority, and Communication divisions of the AEJMC.
- Diversify search committees with both women and minorities to ensure that inclusiveness is at the forefront of recruitment goals. Job search committees included two females – one an Asian American, the other a white female – and one African American male.
- Retain minority and women faculty by pairing them with a department mentor to ensure their adjustment and success in the department. If necessary we will identify a mentor outside the department. The new departmental hire (African male) was assigned a mentor within the department to provide one-on-one help.

To continue to refine a curriculum that reflects university and college values on diversity.

Actions

- Bring a diverse array of speakers to classrooms and use Mass Communication Week to highlight minority speakers, including alumni. The department will continue to seek minority speakers and feature successful minority professionals, such as Tasha Stewart, a black journalist from WCPO TV in Cincinnati, OH, who spoke on campus in spring 2020. For a full list of speakers see **Appendix B**.
- Develop additional internships at minority businesses with minority leadership. A rigorous learning experience remains the focus of all MCOM internships. To better serve our diverse student population, we have worked to develop several internships at minority organizations and businesses with minority leadership. Most recent examples would be Pride Magazine in Charlotte, the Palmetto State Medical Dental Pharmaceutical Association, the non-profit Jireh's Place, and Carolinas' Community Actions Inc.
- Continue developing course assignments that address, discuss or require input from students on issues of diversity. Individual course actions are discussed under Question 3 (Part II, Standard 3) and examples are listed in **Appendix C**.

To coordinate with university-level efforts to support diversity goals.

Actions

- Work closely with the Office of Multicultural Student Life to promote and encourage efforts to develop a more inclusive faculty, staff and student body. The Diversity coordinator added Winthrop University Association of Black Journalists and the Association for Women in Communication to the list of organizations sponsored by Multicultural Student Life in 2019. [Update: Added L.A.D.I.E.S. (Ladies Achieving Diversity Independence Empowerment and Success) to that list in Fall 2020.]

Description of how the unit assesses its progress toward achieving the plan's objectives:

1. To maintain a welcoming campus climate and to strive for and maintain a civil, respectful, efficient and positive workforce.

- One measure of progress towards DEI goals is the Senior Exit Survey. As many as 89 percent of MCOM seniors and 94.4 percent of IMCO seniors strongly agreed or agreed that the overall educational setting in their major was positive (2019-2020). One student wrote, “The people (faculty and students) I have met here have truly helped me along the way and I wouldn’t be where I am today without them!”
- In order to measure if the unit has a climate that is free of harassment and all forms of discrimination we will add questions from the Senior Exit study asking students to rate the climate within the department. Questions may include whether students felt safe sharing their views, if assignments aligned with their abilities, or if educational environments are free of harassment and discrimination. Additionally, the faculty will draft and adopt a statement about harassment and non-discrimination that mirrors the university on syllabi, to be complete in 2021-22.
- To maintain this positive climate, faculty engage in professional development and training to maintain a respectful environment. All department faculty, as do all Winthrop faculty, complete the online Title IX harassment and discrimination training each year – aimed at preventing sexual assault, gender inequality and discrimination. Additionally, the university includes a statement that provides information on reporting options and resources.
- Most faculty members completed “Safe Zone” training, which is designed to increase understanding of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered issues and identify safe zones that are free of discrimination. The Dean of Students is in charge of scheduling Safe Zone Training; more information and videos are available at the Safe Zone [website](#).
- Faculty are also committed to creating an equitable learning environment for people of all backgrounds and abilities. In 2018, mass communication professor Dr. William Schulte won the “Accessibility Advocate” of the month of March from the Office of Accessibility for his efforts to aid students of various abilities.
[Update: In 2021, the equipment in the department's streaming radio station, Eagle Air, was updated and upgraded. The main on-air studio is accessible to all students of various abilities. A new production studio was built above the main studio, which is not wheelchair accessible. However, the main studio is capable of hosting production work and students also have access to at least four nearby editing suites, which are accessible and available to all students where they can produce similar production work.]
- As a measure of our commitment to encourage the exchange of diverse perspectives, we invited 12 minority members of the alumni to speak at events like Mass Comm Week, in 2019-20 – four were female. See the full list in **Appendix B**.
- The mass communication website includes a “Commitment to Diversity, Equity and inclusion” statement.

2. To recruit and retain a diverse student body

The department is actively working to maintain a diverse student body and faculty. In spring 2020, nearly half of the students in the department were minorities (47.6 percent vs. 48.2 percent white) and students were predominantly female (71.3%).

Department Minority and Female Enrollment Rates						
Spring 2018						
N=226	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Two or More Races	White	Asian	International
Female	40.7% (92)	4.0% (9)	1.3% (3)	31% (70)	0.4% (1)	1.8% (4)
Male	2.7% (6)	0.9% (2)	1.3% (3)	8.0% (18)	0	1.8% (4)
Spring 2019						
N=188	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Two or More Races	White	Asian	International
Female	35.6% (67)	3.7% (7)	1.1% (2)	36.2% (68)	0	3.2% (6)
Male	9.0% (17)	0.5% (1)	0.5% (1)	8.0% (15)	0	0.5% (1)
Spring 2020						
N=164	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Two or More Races	White	Asian	International
Female	29.9% (49)	3.0% (5)	1.2% (2)	35.4% (58)	0	1.8% (3)
Male	12.2% (20)	0.6% (1)	0.6% (1)	12.8% (21)	0	0
<i>Source: AAAS, Winthrop University 2019-2021</i>						

*For racial demographics: Minorities are Black/African American; American Indian/Alaskan Native; Hispanic/Latino; Asian/Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander; Two or more races; however, not all races were represented in enrollment

**In spring 2020, there were originally 10 international students. Seven left Winthrop due to the pandemic.

***** Spring enrollment numbers from:

<https://www.winthrop.edu/uploadedFiles/accountability/ugprogramenrollmentofficialfile2020sp.pdf>

- To improve minority enrollment, the department hosts an annual high school media workshop. In 2018-19, a faculty member obtained a list of all high schools in the region to assure that we reached impoverished and minority communities. More than 130 students participated. Survey results revealed that 100 percent rated the workshop with four or five stars (out of five). Attendance grew in 2019-20, with more than 150 students. Proposed workshops include a media bootcamp – which would allow for more interaction and hands-on activity. High schoolers would

be responsible for creating their own multimedia project that they can keep – a reminder of a potential future at Winthrop. This is especially important for first-generation college students, which make up about one third (38%) of Winthrop’s student population and include many minorities (41%), according to the 2020 annual Stewardship Report.

- In order to retain minority students through graduation, the department prioritizes student achievement in a positive climate that values diversity, mentoring from media professionals, including department alumni and opportunities for professional growth.
- In the 2019-20 Senior Exit Survey, most MCOM majors (89.0 percent) and IMCO majors (88.8 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that the major introduces diversity of audiences, ideas and viewpoints. Similarly, 95 percent of MCOM majors and 100 percent of IMCO majors agreed or strongly agreed that their major improves awareness of global interconnectedness of media and audiences.
- The department uses our alumni and community of professionals in Rock Hill to connect students with the media industry and provide opportunities for professional development. Between 2017-2020, 15 internship supervisors were minorities out of about 40-45 placements. One of these professionals – a Black female – was honored as internship supervisor of the year (2018-2019). As internships are required of all students in the department, this provides the opportunity for minority mentorship.
- Faculty actively work to establish new partnerships with minority and local businesses. Some of these professional act as actual clients in the IMCO Senior Seminar (IMCO 475), providing all students with professional skills and networking opportunities. During 2017-2020, capstone projects developed a campaign for a minority chef, created a plan to encourage minority enrollment at a community college, and partnered with the City of Rock Hill, strategizing ways to reach residents from diverse backgrounds.
- In 2017-2018 the faculty organized the Alumni Mentor Luncheon, connecting students with more than a dozen media professionals, including minority graduates, in order to honor alumni achievements and allow for networking and mentoring.
- The department continues to offer students opportunities for professional development by encouraging and supporting student organizations. For example, when the Winthrop University Association of Black Journalists (WUABJ) won national student chapter of the year (2019), the news was heavily promoted on social media with pictures and captions. Student organizations, such as Her Campus – which provides female students with opportunities for professional advancement – also receive department support, such as promotion and advising for a charity clothing drive in spring 2018 for a community non-profit. Winthrop recognized the students’ success by awarding Her Campus “Student Organization of the Year” (2016). The Winthrop chapter was additionally distinguished (2017-2018) as a “pink level” chapter by the national Her Campus organization, indicating Winthrop is one of the top ten chapters in the nation.
[Update: Her Campus organized a workshop for all Winthrop students in spring 2021 called “Branding Yourself,” which benefited young entrepreneurs of all backgrounds and identities.]
- Faculty sponsored a field trip to the South Carolina Broadcasters Association job fair in Columbia, S.C., spring 2019, supporting four female Black students. It additionally organized a speed-networking event on campus with two-dozen sports media professionals (Spring 2019).

- Providing diverse role models motivates success. Alumni and media professionals from diverse backgrounds are continuously invited to campus to share their stories. See **Appendix B** for a list of guest speakers. [Update: In spring 2021, Kim Woods (class of 1990) was honored by the state of South Carolina for becoming the first female African American publisher of a mainstream newspaper in South Carolina – an achievement earning her recognition from the South Carolina Congress House of Representatives, who issued a House Resolution in her name. She was invited to speak on campus during MCOM week in 2021-22.]

3. To recruit and retain a diverse workforce and maintain a diverse leadership and management

The mass communication department supports Winthrop's policy of equal educational and non-discrimination in its employment, recruitment, hiring, training, etc., as stated in the university's [Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Policy](#), which is compliant with Title IX. Discrimination based on the candidate or employee's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and childbirth, or related medical conditions), national origin, age (forty-plus / 40+), protected disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or other characteristics is prohibited under applicable law.

- The department worked closely with the College of Arts and Sciences Diversity and Inclusion committee during the two job searches in 2018 to fill open positions in IMCO and MCOM. A number of the faculty took the [Implicit Bias](#) Test to increase awareness of personal biases regarding race. Faculty recruitment ads included an equal opportunity statement and were placed with AEJMC, which supports the advancement of minority scholarship, and the listservs of HCBU's.
- There were six Skype interviews in the MCOM job search (2018) – three of whom were Asian and three Caucasian. Two females were in the group. Another candidate, a white male, was interviewed in person. Three candidates (two Asian males and the white male) were invited for an on-campus interview. One of the Asian candidates was offered the position but declined. The white male was offered the position and accepted.
- The IMCO search in 2018 had five Skype finalists. Of the candidates, four were female. Three of the four females were international candidates. Two of those females, one white and one international, along with a male international candidate, were invited to campus. The male (African) accepted the position.
- Retention remains a priority – both within the department and university. To support DEI goals one faculty member was assigned to mentor the new international hire. Additionally, another member volunteered to chair the subcommittee on employee retention in the CAS Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The unit foresees conducting surveys of both alumni and current students to gauge what has been done correctly in this effort and what can be improved.
[Update: That faculty member assumed role of co-chair of the CAS Diversity of Inclusion Committee in 2020-21.]
- Confidence and satisfaction in senior leadership are crucial for faculty retention. In 2017, all (8/8) responding faculty on a department survey (conducted annually by the CAS dean's office)

selected either “Meets Expectations” or “Exceeds Expectations” in a response to a question about the chair. In 2018, all (9/9) respondents chose meets or exceeds; in 2019, all (8/8) respondents chose meets or exceeds; and in 2020, all (6/6) respondents chose meets or exceeds. No one selected “does not meet expectations” in any of those years. By comparison, university wide, 56 percent of new hires in Winthrop’s Employee Satisfaction Report (2019), said they were confident in senior leadership.

4. To continue to refine a curriculum that reflects university and college values on diversity and inclusiveness

- Improving global awareness and the appreciation for diversity is a core part of curriculum planning. Winthrop’s University Level Competencies, specifically ULC-3, states that Winthrop graduates understand the interconnected nature of the world and the possess the ability to collaborate with members of diverse academic, professional and cultural communities as informed and engaged citizens. For the University as a whole, the National Survey on Student Engagement ([NSSE](#)) measures progress towards these goals by asking questions about student engagement with people of diverse backgrounds (social, racial/ethnic, religious, etc.).
- Two surveys test these core values: (1) the Global Citizenship survey; and (2) the Senior Exit survey – both of which are given to graduating seniors in the course “Senior Portfolio.” Findings from the 2019-2020 global citizenship survey revealed that by large (97.5%), the program helped them to become more aware of the global interconnectedness of media and audiences. In the senior exit survey (2019-20), 89 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their major introduced them to diverse audiences, ideas, and viewpoints. [Update: The survey will be updated in 2021-22 to include questions about race, sexual orientation, gender and inclusiveness.]
- To measure awareness of DEI and application, as outlined by ACEJMC, the department will refine rubrics on syllabi. These include: (1) a greater understanding of diversity and the role of professionals in a global society; (2) the ability to apply ethical principles to modern events; (3) the ability to work independently and with others, including those of a different gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and other forms of diversity; (3) to critically analyze their own work and others; and (4) to communicate effectively. An adoption date is set for 2021-22.
- Faculty implement assignments each semester to promote awareness, experience and critical thinking with regards to diversity. Examples are listed below. For the full list, see **Appendix C**.

MCOM 226 – Multimedia Storytelling and Production

- Students were tasked with conducting an interview with someone who has experienced racial injustice

MCOM 241 – Media Writing

- Includes a major story concerning issues of diversity and/or global awareness

MCOM 301 – Theory and Research

- Students completed a critical analysis of the movie Black Panther and the role of racial representation in American cinema, while considering its impact on social perception

MCOM 325 – Digital News Writing and Video Production

- Students analyzed journalistic coverage of protests against racial injustice and police brutality

MCOM 310 – Mass Media Law

- Students discuss and analyze issues rooted in civil rights
- MCOM 412 – Ethics and Issues in Mass Communication
- Students are given an ethical scenario and asked to generate a course of action based on multiple perspectives, including stakeholders and outside sources.
- IMCO 341 – Advertising Principles
- Students are to demonstrate knowledge of strategies for targeting minority audiences through advertising. Discussions of target audiences in both domestic and international settings (based on book chapters) introduce students to multicultural issues in advertising/marketing as well as the selection of audience-appropriate messages.
- IMCO 475 – Senior Seminar in Integrated Marketing Communication
- Many assigned readings are on cultural issues or multicultural sensitivity with related class discussions.

5. To coordinate with university-level efforts to support DEI goals (ongoing).

Winthrop University was honored as one of the 2021-22 First-gen Forward Institutions – a designation that recognizes the commitment to advancing a diverse student body.

- The university and department also value global interconnectedness, knowing that greater awareness and innovation emerge when people of diverse cultural backgrounds and ethnicities interact in a respectful exchange. Communication skills are vital in a rapidly globalizing world. On the Alumni Survey (2019-20) one member said, “[The department] is a really diverse career so real projects, practices and simulations in class are very important to be able to acquire a global vision and prepare us to work life.”
- Bonnye Stuart led the department’s first short-term study abroad trip to China in summer 2017. Two other planned short-term trips were canceled because of low enrollment. During 2017-20 more than a dozen MCOM/IMCO students studied abroad. The department will work closely with the International Center to increase these figures. Additionally, several students completed international internships in countries such as Britain, Spain and France. The department welcomed more than 10 French students in spring 2020, though seven could not continue their IMCO education due to COVID concerns.
- Global attitudes and experiences are measured each year in the Global Citizenship survey given to graduating seniors. Data from 2019-20 reveal a large majority of respondents (88.3%) said they “agree” or “strongly agree” that they see themselves as a “global citizen.” One student wrote, “This major teaches you how to be open minded and how to carry conversations and hear people out from their different point of views who are from different cultures.” Many seniors (95.2%) also reported that learning about other cultures, “makes me a better person.” All indicated that they believe in the rights of others.
- Although 90.5% said they love to travel and see the world, only one fifth (20.9%) said they had participated in a study abroad, short-term course or study abroad Maymester. The faculty will offer more short-term experiences and Maymasters to reach students that may not have the money or inclination to go abroad but would go somewhere within the United States. Such a trip was led by Dr. Nathaniel Frederick in fall 2018 who took 22 numbers of students to Washington, D.C.
- The faculty support two academic programs – TRiO Achievers Program and the McNair Scholars Program – that assist students from disadvantaged backgrounds that are often underrepresented. Both are aimed at improving retention and graduation rates. TRiO encourages leadership,

diversity and educational excellence for first generation college students, low income and the disabled. Four MCOM/IMCO majors were enrolled in the TRiO program in 2019-20 (75 percent female and 50 percent minority). The McNair program is for students of diverse backgrounds seeking to attend graduate school. It prepares students by requiring a rigorous research study under faculty mentorship. During 2017-20, six students participated in the McNair program, supported by three department faculty members who volunteered as mentors. Faculty advisors identify potential students who might benefit from these programs – both those who are academically struggling and those who show tremendous potential as a scholar and candidate for graduate work – during mandatory advising sessions each semester. During these sessions, advisers review grades and learn more about students’ aspirations and concerns.

- Additionally, the department joined a university initiative to visit regional high schools in an effort to form relationships with teachers and recruit a wide range of students from diverse backgrounds. Four faculty members spoke with multimedia/journalism students at South Pointe high school in Rock Hill in fall 2019. A second trip to Fort Mill high school is planned for fall 2021. Additionally, in 2015 we participated in the Richland One Communications conference at Eau Claire high school which exposed students of diverse backgrounds to careers in the media industry.
- Our faculty participated in the university’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion workshops, which began in 2020-21 and are continuing throughout 2021-22.
- The department anticipates working closely with Kinyata Adams Brown, who was recently promoted to the role of Associate Dean for Engagement, Diversity, and Inclusive Excellence. Ideas include working with her office on promotions and publicity for engagement, recruitment and retention efforts; and maintaining further alignment of our diversity and inclusion goals with those of the university.
- Beginning in 2022, the CAS Inclusion Diversity and Equity Award (IDEA) will recognize departments’ diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, strategies and efforts. The department will use this initiative as one measure of success.