Memorandum

To: Undergraduate Programs Committee

From: Brad Lewter, College UPC Representative,

School of Communication & Multimedia Studies

Re: Program Changes for Multimedia Journalism (MMSJ)

Date: November 13, 2015

Florida Atlantic University – Undergraduate Programs – PROGRAM CHANGE REQUEST

College: Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters

Department: School of Communication and Multimedia Studies (SCMS)

Changes To Be Effective: Summer 2016

*Program Changes in the BA in Multimedia Studies: Multimedia Journalism (MMSJ)*

Deletion of the MMSJ Pre-Major in Multimedia Studies (PMMS) and all MMSJ admission requirements listed in the FAU Catalog with the exception of a minimum overall GPA of 2.0 – to be maintained throughout enrollment at FAU. *Upon applying to FAU, both FTIC and Transfer Students can immediately declare their MMSJ Major*.

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| ***Approved by:***  Department Chair: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  College Curriculum Chair: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  College Dean: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  UUPC Chair: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Undergraduate Studies Dean: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  UFS President: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Provost: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | ***Date:***  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

*Narrative Justification for MMSJ Program Changes*

*Deletion of the MMSJ Pre-Major in Multimedia Studies (PMMS)*

The introduction of the MMSJ Pre-Major in AY 2010 - 11 improved the average GPA of the 51 MMSJ graduates in AY 2014 - 15 to the level of B+ (3.3). Unfortunately, restrictions were placed on its implementation by the requirement that students have to formally declare a major after 72 credit hours. Transfer students, entering FAU with an average of 60 credit hours, had to drop out of the MMSJ Pre-Major after one or two semesters and switch to “temporary majors,” mostly Sociology and Anthropology, but also to completely unrelated disciplines like Exercise Science and Health Promotion. Significantly, transfer students accounted for 63% of all MMSJ graduates in AY 2014 – 15. Since SCMS was not informed about the identity of the temporary majors, it became increasingly difficult to assess course demand and schedule the appropriate number of sections for required classes.

Last year, the new advising policy of having FTIC students declare a major during their first year at FAU further raised the number of unidentified temporary majors who actually intend to pursue a MMSJ degree. Finally, the most recent policy change of having transfer students declare a major already after 60 credit hours makes it impossible to plan the MMSJ schedule unless one constantly searches all MMSJ class rolls for potential temporary majors and then checks all their transcripts to see how far they have advanced through the MMSJ curriculum and which required MMSJ courses they would have to take next.

Last but not least, there is the policy of not counting the MMSJ Pre-Majors as the equivalent of majors when allocating resources on the basis of headcount enrollment, which severely disadvantages MMSJ applications for faculty positions. In the most recent example, a MMSJ application, requested by the Dean, was given only a low priority in spite of the high MMSJ graduation rate and the fact that in the last academic year 82% of all FTIC students majoring in MMSJ graduated in six years or less. Unless one can add to the official MMSJ headcount enrollment of 144 in AY 2014 - 2015 the number of about 70 MMSJ Pre-Majors as well as the estimated 40 temporary majors actually pursuing a MMSJ degree, this critical disadvantage will remain.

In short, the MMSJ faculty has multiple serious reasons to ask for the deletion of the MMSJ Pre-Major.