RECOMMENDATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION AND THE L&S ACADEMIC PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE DEPARTMENT TO JOURNALISM, ADVERTISING, AND MEDIA STUDIES

Recommendation:

That the Faculty of the College of Letters and Science recommend to the Dean approval of the request to change the name of the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication to the Department of Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies

Rationale:

- The presence of the word “mass” in the Department’s name is a 20th-century anachronism that has little to do with today’s media world (or with the content of the courses the department teaches).

- The presence of the word “communication” in the Department’s name makes it difficult for graduate applicants and prospective undergraduate majors to distinguish between JMC and the Department of Communication. The proposed change would minimize any possible confusion.

- The addition of the phrase “media studies” to the Department’s name would enable the name to accurately describe a major component of the Department’s efforts. One of the Department’s three undergraduate concentrations is Media Studies. The Department’s sole graduate program is an M.A. in Media Studies.

- The addition of the word “advertising” to the Department’s name would enable students to know to which department to go for instruction in this high-demand area.

The new department name would represent more accurately the Department’s professional areas (journalism, advertising) and its liberal-arts area (media studies). We can see nothing but advantages to having the name of the Department (and its undergraduate curricular area) be an accurate reflection of the mixture of the curriculum’s areas of concentration.

The new department name would be fairly long (five words and 42 characters, including spaces), but it would not be the longest department name in the College of Letters and Science. The Department of French, Italian, and Comparative Literature holds that honor. Five-word department names can also be found outside of the College of Letters and Science (e.g., the Department of Educational Policy and Community Studies in the School of Education).

The proposed name change does not reflect any change in the mission of the Department. The current array of undergraduate concentrations and graduate programs will remain the same. There is no intention or proposition that the Department monopolize any teaching or research area by adding “advertising” and “media studies” to its name. The name is meant only to reflect more clearly the nature of the curricula offered by the Department. Doing so will help the Department, the College, and the University attract students interested in the Department’s areas of specialty and therefore represents an important step forward in the advancement of the campus.