My name is Chloé Dwyer. I am from Dallas, Texas. I am an undergraduate, rising senior at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, Mississippi. I am studying integrated marketing communications (IMC) within our School of Journalism and New Media. IMC falls under the New Media department, as it deals with social media, public relations, advertising, marketing, and business. Within this program, I have had the opportunity to take IMC and journalism classes that have truly taught me an abundance of skills I can take into my future career. After my completion of undergraduate school, I would love to attend Northwestern University in hopes of gaining my masters in IMC.

During my time as an undergraduate student, I have been fortunate to work in many roles on campus that deal with obligations and assignments similar to what I hope my career will entail. I have worked on all social media and marketing tasks for the TEDxUniversityofMississippi event in March. TEDx is an independent event styled similarly to TED talks, but on a local level. Along with that, I am currently the co-director of public relations in the Student Activities Association. This role involves running a committee of “PR Hype Team” members, managing all social media accounts for the Student Activities Association, and serving as a photographer and videographer at all events put on by the organization.

I am also a social media ambassador for the university. These are students who work on all marketing and branding methods that are implemented throughout the university, specifically through social media. Along with those positions, I also serve as an ambassador for the School of Journalism and New Media. This allows me to give tours to members who are visiting our academic school, whether that’s prospective students or professionals. Through this role, I am given plenty of other volunteer opportunities throughout the year to represent our university’s School of Journalism and New Media.

I have such a strong passion for my major, and every bit of knowledge I have gained in this area has only grown my passion. I am proud to be an IMC student, and I am genuinely thrilled to continue my education with IMC in graduate school, whether that’s at Northwestern University or at Ole Miss. I hope the career I eventually settle into sparks as much joy and creativity for me as my college education has so far.

I see the Journalism School of Tomorrow shining so brightly. I think the journalism and new media industry is really growing and will continue to do so for years to come far beyond
imagination. There are so many technological advancements happening around us daily that impact journalism so heavily. I see that making a beneficial difference in journalism schools across the nation. I believe schools could start implementing media labs in their journalism schools. This could be a creative space that provide students with many remarkable resources. This space could include many computers that come with all the useful programs installed, such as the entire Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office, and other programs that benefit journalism and other aspects, such as graphic design and digital design.

This space could also include iPad Pros with Apple Pencils that allow students to create advanced pieces by hand digitally. I’m sure there are many other devices that could help students create advanced pieces of journalism that I am unaware of, or that will exist in the future. I think universities could begin putting some of their funds towards more forward-thinking machinery that could place their journalism schools far ahead other institutions.

With the rate that all media mediums are evolving around us, there is no reason our nation’s journalism schools should not be striving towards the same goal. I am aware that creating spaces, such as the ones I have mentioned, is an expensive improvement. However, I believe with the right motivation and creativity, it can be done. Hopefully, in the future, we see journalism schools across the world advancing into a “tomorrow” mindset and creating spaces for students to thrive.

When I think of differences between current journalism schools and future journalism schools, I see an immense amount of possibility. I assume many current journalism schools have computers. However, I am not quite sure what institutions are providing beyond that. I think journalism and new media require excellent resources that allow them to create impressive content and gain experience with advanced technology and programming.
I believe the most major difference will be the devices provided and the professors they are learning from. Those who are responsible for sharing knowledge and training for certain concepts and programs heavily impact a student’s journalism experience. When I think back on professors I have had that created an environment that was beyond challenging to grow in, I see how little knowledge I gained in the coursework. However, in contrary, I think back to times where I had professors who truly wanted to share their knowledge and see their students grow and advance in their coursework. Those professors have shaped me as a journalism and new media student, and ultimately have helped me retain knowledge I will implement in my career one day.

I think journalism schools of tomorrow must have professors who are genuinely passionate about growing their student’s knowledge and passion for the topic, or else no one is benefitting from the courses. These instructors are typically the ones who students hold connection with throughout the years. Professors who share the students’ passions typically become mentors to students and can assist them with future plans. I believe the biggest difference in today’s journalism schools and the future’s should be passionate and wise professors and technology that gives students the chance to be more innovative than their competitors.

I am lucky enough to attend a university that provides me with many great resources, such as camera equipment rentals, recording centers, media centers, tabloid style and 3D printing, and advanced Mac desktops that have the Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office and many other creative programming. However, I know most schools are not as fortunate. I do not see many changes I would want to incorporate into my university. However, if I had to pick one, it would be more recreational workshops to gain additional experience in your own time. I would
love if I was given more chances to attend free workshops and learn different techniques and methods I could use in journalism and new media.

My school allows students to specialize in certain areas and take an additional three to five courses. In this case, I think of specialization courses. It would be so nice to be offered short entry-level workshops that could allow me to gain knowledge about certain courses that could possibly spark new interests. If students could attend these workshops, such as gaining experience in Adobe InDesign, they could seek other experiences. This would allow students to get their feet wet without having to pay and commit to a whole course for an entire semester, or intersession.

Sometimes, there are aspects of journalism that need to be revealed once, and then a student is hooked. Once they have seen what the experience is like, they can work on the new hobby in their free time and gain more knowledge and skills. I think this method would show students what they could potentially be missing. However, I am not sure how feasible this idea would be. When I think of the future of journalism education, many words come to my mind. Some of the first are innovation, unconventional, and creative.

Right off the bat, I think of innovation. To me, innovation means taking an idea that already exists and making it better. I think this is basically the epitome of journalism and new media. We are taking a medium that has been around for hundreds of years and constantly creating ways to take it further. The first piece of journalism was a colonial news sheet, and now we share news on our wireless smartphones. If you truly wrap your head around the immense spectacularism of that, it is truly revolutionary.

The next word that comes to mind is unconventional. I guess in a lot of ways, journalism is an old idea. However, I think when you put it in terms of where we are today, we are truly
unconventional with our advanced journalism and new media. The methods used for journalism are progressing in ways we could have never imagined or believed until we held the ideas in our own hands through devices.

And finally, a word I believe many people associate with journalism is creativity. Journalism takes a lot of creative thinking. Ultimately, creativity is the only way you can produce journalism that stands out as exceptional compared to its competitors in the market. Most companies and even people that produce journalism as a hobby have creative thought processes, and they try and create content that will be new and exciting to consumers.

I think all three of these words are the backbone of journalism and new media education and help make it a popular and thriving educational experience. Many people are attracted to possessing a degree in this field because it allows them to use their creativity and be placed in a field that is far more advanced than many other fields. Within my current program, integrated marketing communications, there are many impressive courses I have enjoyed. And I am excited to see the courses I will be placed in for my final year of undergraduate school.

The course I have enjoyed the most has been Creative Visual Thinking. Of the courses I have taken, this has by far been the best. This course teaches students how to use the Adobe Creative Suite and how to create impressive content. I have found this course to be the best in my program because it has taught me so many skills I know I will need for my career, whatever it may be. I enjoyed the professor for this course. I think this relates to what I mentioned earlier about the importance of having passionate teachers that truly want to see you grow.

My professor for this course, Ellen Kellum, has made such an effort to ensure that all of her students are able to keep up and retain the knowledge they are gaining. Adobe has some applications that can be extremely tricky to navigate, but my professor has helped teach me how
to operate the program successfully, along with some of the tricks that most people might not know.

I have a creative brain, so learning how to use programs such as InDesign and Photoshop have sparked passion for my major. I believe that getting comfortable in running programs such as the Adobe Creative Suite is a true test of your ability to be comfortable in your future career. Of course, it is challenging, but I think it is important to find comfort within the challenges you face, especially when it comes to academics. Having patience and persistence as a student can take you far in your career. I hope I continue to take courses in the future that not only challenge me, but continue to grow my knowledge in journalism and new media.