

SENATE QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
Cyclical Review of the undergraduate and graduate programs
in Journalism
Executive Summary and Final Assessment Report

This Executive Summary and Final Assessment Report of the cyclical review of Carleton's undergraduate and graduate programs in Journalism are provided pursuant to the provincial Quality Assurance Framework and Carleton's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The undergraduate and graduate programs in Journalism reside in the School of Journalism and Communication, a unit administered by the Faculty of Public and Global Affairs.

As a consequence of the review, the programs were categorized by Carleton University's Senate Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (SQAPC) as being of good quality. (Carleton's IQAP 7.2.13-7.2.14).

The External Reviewers' report offered a very positive assessment of the programs. Within the context of this positive assessment, the report nonetheless made a number of recommendations for the continuing enhancement of the programs. These recommendations were productively addressed by the Director of the School of Journalism and Communication and the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Public and Global Affairs in responses to the External Reviewers' report and Implementation on Plan that was submitted to SQAPC on February 13, 2025.

Journalism
Unit Response to External Reviewers' Report & Implementation Plan
Programs Being Reviewed: Undergraduate and Graduate Programs

Note: This document is forwarded to Senate, the Quality Council and posted on the Vice- Provost's external website.

Introduction & General Comments

Please include any general comments regarding the External Reviewers' Report.

The Journalism program was pleased to receive the Reviewers' very positive External Reviewers' report on March 25, 2024. This report was shared with our faculty and staff, and we are committed to the continual improvement of our programs to enhance the student, staff, and faculty experience. This document contains both a response to the External Reviewers' Report and an Implementation Plan (Section B) which have been created in consultation with the Dean.

For each recommendation **one** of the following responses must be selected:

Agreed to unconditionally: used when the unit agrees to and is able to take action on the recommendation without further consultation with any other parties internal or external to the unit.

Agreed to if additional resources permit: used when the unit agrees with the recommendation, however action can only be taken if additional resources are made available. Units must describe the resources needed to implement the recommendation and provide an explanation demonstrating how they plan to obtain those resources. In these cases, discussions with the Deans will normally be required and therefore identified as an action item.

Agreed to in principle: used when the unit agrees with the recommendation, however action is dependent on something other than resources. Units must describe these dependencies and determine what actions, if any, will be taken.

Not agreed to: used when the unit does not agree with the recommendation and therefore will not be taking further action. A rationale must be provided to indicate why the unit does not agree (no action should be associated with this response).

Calendar Changes

If any of the action items you intend to implement will result in calendar changes, please describe what those changes will be. To submit a formal calendar change, please do so using the Courseleaf system.

Hiring

Where an action item requires additional hiring (faculty or staff) the owner should at minimum include the Dean of the faculty and member of the unit.

UNIT RESPONSE AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN Programs Being Reviewed: Undergraduate and Graduate Programs in Journalism Prepared by (name/position/unit/date): Allan Thompson, Director, School of Journalism and Communication, January 21, 2025					
External Reviewer Recommendation & Categorization Note: Recommendations highlighted in yellow were also made as part of a previous review	Unit Response (choose only one for each recommendation): 1- Agreed to unconditionally 2- Agreed to if additional resources permit (describe resources) 3- Agreed to in principle 4- Not agreed to Rationales are required for categories 2, 3 & 4	Action Item	Owner	Timeline	Will the action described require calendar changes? (Y or N)
1. Holding the line against position reductions to stabilize the unit through a challenging period; (concern)	1. Agreed to unconditionally We are responding to this review of Carleton's journalism program at a time of near existential crisis in Canada's journalism industry, when continued support for the place of journalism in our democracy has never been more important. In that context, there are powerful reasons for Carleton to continue to support our program, despite the ongoing pressures of budget constraint. In internal discussions with the Dean the journalism program head has repeatedly communicated that we are at a point where it would be virtually impossible for us to effectively deliver our core curriculum in its current form were we to endure further cuts. We face a need to replace retiring faculty from the unit and to renew existing limited term appointment arrangements, in	The Journalism program head will continue to advocate for replacement positions with the Dean and to explore other opportunities to add to the program's complement of teaching faculty through a proactive strategy to seek out an endowed chair in Journalism and Democracy. We will engage the assistance of the Department of University Advancement in the effort to secure support for an endowed chair. And our strategic review process will explore further steps we can take in terms of program delivery to adapt to budget constraints.	Journalism program head, Dean FPA	Ongoing	N

	<p>particular because of a shortage of full-time faculty equipped to teach our audio and video workshops. (This relates directly to point 3). At present, FPA is not permitted to replace retiring faculty but instead must return those positions to the centre because of FPA's budget situation. As a result, two recent retirees (one a broadcast specialist), have not been replaced and limited term appointments that helped alleviate our shortage of broadcast instructors were also not renewed. Like every unit, we want to hold the line on position reductions, and in the context of our role in fostering Canada's journalism profession, we think this is essential. But this is a budgetary matter that is beyond our control.</p>				
<p>2. Adopting enrollment management innovations to raise the yield rate (which currently converts only one third of acceptances to registrations); (concern)</p>	<p>1 - Agreed to unconditionally</p>	<p>In direct response to the challenges we face in enrollment, the journalism program has decided to strike a new Recruitment Committee in the coming academic year to deal directly with all issues related to recruitment. Core members of the committee will include the Journalism program head, undergraduate and graduate supervisors and several other faculty members, as appropriate given their other service duties.</p> <p>To aid in our efforts to innovate in ways that will raise the yield rate to convert more acceptances to registrations, we plan to take a number of steps, in collaboration with Carleton's Undergraduate Recruitment Office:</p> <p>Our new recruitment committee will request detailed information from Carleton's recruitment office about their current tactics and strategy for improving our yield rate.</p>	<p><i>Journalism program head; Recruitment Committee</i></p>	<p>2024-25</p>	<p>N</p>

		<p>Understanding what efforts are currently being made on our behalf will help us to plan our own course of action.</p> <p>It is our understanding that Recruitment has lowered the entry grade required to receive an acceptance for journalism, but we question whether that information has been effectively communicated to applicants. Current recruitment material still makes reference to an entry grade in the high 80s.</p> <p>Our recruitment committee would like to play a much more direct role in communication with applicants given acceptances. We have in mind such initiatives as a postcard campaign (that would see current students send postcards to applicants), virtual open house events and a reinvigorated phone campaign that would deploy text messages to applicants, inviting them to schedule a phone conversation.</p> <p>We will explore ways to work to identify applicants from underrepresented communities and make additional efforts to engage with them.</p> <p>We will continue with our current efforts to track our graduates more effectively by creating a database of as many of our graduates as possible using LinkedIn and use that information to spread the word about the career possibilities for our graduates.</p>			
3. Restricting sessional employment to non-core curriculum to strengthen curricular cohesion, supervision	<p>4. Not agreed to</p> <p>We do not agree with the premise of this recommendation that restricting contract instructors to non-core curriculum is the best route to fostering curricular cohesion and research capacity. We take a nuanced</p>		N/A		N

capacity, and research productivity; (concern)	<p>approach to what we consider to be “core” to our curriculum. While you could view only compulsory courses as being “core”, we regard it as essential to implementing our EDI strategy to continue to offer a range of courses touching on such issues as journalism and belonging, trauma-informed reporting and the history of Black journalism in Canada. We want full-time faculty members to be able to continue to deliver those specialized courses, while also taking on teaching duties in some of our compulsory workshops. Our approach is not to restrict contract instructors from teaching in our core, professional workshops, but rather, to achieve a better balance of full-time faculty and Cis from the industry. We have been successful in reducing the use of Cis in some of our core workshops, such as JOUR2201, achieving a better balance. But we still face challenges in reducing the use of Cis and achieving a better balance between full-time faculty and Cis in other core workshops, particularly our third-year audio and video workshops and our fourth-year video workshop. Our inability to renew the contracts of limited term faculty members who were broadcast specialists makes it even more difficult to have a better balance between faculty and Cis in these workshops.</p>				
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<p>4. Using targeted incentives and hiring (e.g. a Canada Research Chair in Journalism and Democracy) as catalysts for expanding the unit's research enterprise; (concern)</p>	<p>2 - Agreed to if additional resources permit (describe resources)</p>	<p>We will explore creation of a Chair in Journalism and Democracy, either as a Canada Research Chair or supported by an endowment. When available, CRCs are allocated on a competitive basis to units. If one comes available, we will apply. While a CRC brings reputational benefits to the university, establishment of an endowed chair would allow us to create a teaching position that would take on courses related to the mandate of the chair.</p> <p>In addition to giving us the ability to flesh out our teaching offerings relating to political reporting and covering civic institutions, the mandate of a Chair in Journalism and Democracy would also expand the unit's research enterprise through the initiation and oversight of research projects touching on such topics as how best to nurture and build community journalism and the role of journalists in fostering greater understanding of our civic institutions.</p> <p>The current program head has already been working with Advancement to identify a donor who would support the establishment of a research chair in Journalism and Democracy and those efforts will continue but could also benefit from additional support from Advancement.</p>	<p><i>Journalism program head</i></p> <p><i>Dean of FPA</i></p> <p><i>University Advancement</i></p>	<p><i>2024-25 and ongoing</i></p>	<p><i>N</i></p>
<p>5. Identifying and alleviating stress-points for the administrative support team; (concern)</p>	<p>1 - Agreed to unconditionally</p>	<p>A continued turnover in administrative staff has aggravated the stress level for our administrative support team, with a number of members who are in backfill positions. We think it is important also to draw a distinction between the roles of administrative staff and the technical team of technology specialists that is integrated into the delivery of our program.</p>	<p><i>Journalism program head</i></p> <p><i>Tech Committee</i></p>	<p><i>2024-25 and ongoing</i></p>	<p><i>N</i></p>

		<p>To create a better understanding of the roles of our staff members, we plan to create a new handbook that will fully detail the roles and responsibilities of all of our staff members, helping faculty members to better understand who does what.</p> <p>To address concerns from our technical team, we have created a tech committee comprised of our staff technology specialists with faculty members to review on an ongoing basis the technical and equipment needs of the program and how best to integrate technology into our curriculum.</p> <p>We will also take steps to improve training and onboarding for new staff members by directly involving the graduate and undergraduate supervisors in the process (so that new staff gain more familiarity with the delivery of our academic program) and by instituting a new practice of holding an 'welcoming session' for new arrivals for properly meet all of their colleagues and get a better orientation to our staff, faculty and facilities.</p>			
6. Reimagining space to create an attractive gathering place for undergraduate students; (concern)	2 - Agreed to if additional resources permit (describe resources)	<p>In partnership with the Communication and Media Studies unit (with whom we share our Resource Centre), we plan to pursue a project to convert the existing study lounge space that currently takes up about half of our Resource Centre into a student lounge.</p> <p>At a minimum, we would like to immediately make available in that space a fridge, microwave and Keurig-style coffee machine and some food vending facilities. Students have told us consistently that they lack access to such facilities in Richcraft Hall.</p>	<p><i>Journalism program head/Communication and Media Studies program head</i></p> <p><i>Dean of FPA</i></p>	2024-25	N

		<p>We would like to underline that we would not restrict such space only to undergraduate students. We plan to engage with our student societies in Journalism and BMPD on this project and ask them to help us with the maintenance of such a new space.</p> <p>We will immediately begin to explore a major project to establish a student-run café in our Resource Centre lounge area, something similar to the Leo's café that currently operates in the Mackenzie building with the support of the Faculty of Engineering. This vibrant, engaging space offers students a place to gather, enjoy a coffee, tea or soft drink and also sandwiches and other food offerings. The student societies manage and staff the café, but with financial support from the Faculty. We would like to explore a similar arrangement to create such a space in our Resource Centre.</p> <p>Given current resource constraints, we will reach out to the Department of University Advancement for support in identifying potential donors for such a project that would directly benefit students.</p>			
7. Forming ad hoc committees to find sustainable solutions to BJ/BJMPD cross-over content and BJ/BJH scheduling conflicts; (concern) and	1 - Agreed to unconditionally	Our curriculum committees in Journalism and BMPD are taking up this issue and will seek out sustainable solutions to crossover content in courses offered to both Journalism and BMPD students and to rectify scheduling conflicts.	<i>Journalism program head/BMPD program head</i>	2024-25	N

<p>8. Strengthening endowment-building support to the internship program. (concern)</p>	<p>2 - Agreed to if additional resources permit (describe resources)</p>	<p>In the development of its new strategic plan, Carleton’s Faculty of Public Affairs will add the word “Global” to its name. In keeping with that spirit, we will continue to strongly encourage the Dean of FPA, the Department of University Advancement, and others at Carleton to help us to seek out the financial support that will make it possible for us to continue and grow the journalism program’s international internship programs. Over the years, these programs have traditionally been supported by significant internal funding – from Graduate Studies, the Provost and the Dean – as well as external funding from the now-defunct Reader’s Digest Foundation and occasionally, other donors. At present, there is no funding on hand or in the pipeline to support the international internship program beyond this round of summer internships. It is of critical importance that we identify long-term, stable funding for this vital internship program, which fits squarely within the objectives of FPA’s new strategic plan.</p> <p>In addition, we will explore prospects for seeking endowment support for our efforts to create paid summer internship opportunities with our Capital Current online publication.</p>	<p><i>Journalism program head</i> <i>Dean of FPA</i></p>	<p><i>2024-25 and ongoing</i></p>	<p><i>N</i></p>
<p>9. Forming a task-force to develop a ten year strategic plan, building key priorities from self-study findings. (opportunity)</p>	<p>3 – Agreed to in principle</p>	<p>At our May 21 journalism faculty and staff retreat we agreed that it is imperative for us to launch a task force to develop a strategic plan for the journalism program. We plan to develop a five-year strategic plan, in keeping with the usual cycle for such initiatives at Carleton. We want our task force to build on the key priorities from the self-study findings and also prepare us to continue to adapt to a rapidly evolving media landscape in Canada and to our budget constraints</p> <p>But to accomplish this strategic review, we seek financial support from FPA and support from the Office of Quality</p>	<p><i>Dean of FPA</i> <i>Journalism program head</i></p>	<p><i>2024-25 and ongoing</i></p>	<p><i>N</i></p>

		Initiatives that would allow us to retain the outside expertise to lead us through this process, to conduct our own SWOT analysis and embark on crafting the strategic plan.			
10. Assessing self-study's program proposals (i.e. Certificate in Indigenous Journalism, online Master's, and Master's in Media Management) to reverse enrollment decline; (opportunity)	1 - Agreed to unconditionally	<p>These initiatives – the certificate in Indigenous Journalism, an online Master's and new programming in media management – are key to our strategic planning. As such, the strategic planning task force that was struck on May 21 will be tracking progress toward the establishment of these three initiatives.</p> <p>Our Associate Professor, Indigenous Journalism and (Story)telling, has already made considerable progress in laying the foundations for the proposed Journalism in Indigenous Communities Certificate (JIICC) by applying for three different grants: a \$75,000 USD Vision Grant from the Spencer Foundation, a \$50,000 Major Project Grant from Inspirit Foundation, and a \$3M grant from the EleV Program at Mastercard Foundation. We hope to have results of these submissions soon.</p> <p>The Journalism program head will establish at our scheduled June 17 faculty meeting two new working groups to move forward on establishment of an online MJ program and a new joint stream on media management with Sprott.</p>	<p><i>Journalism program head</i></p> <p><i>Strategic Planning task force</i></p> <p><i>Professor Indigenous Journalism and Storytelling.</i></p>	2024-25	N
11. Assessing potential to expand internships' duration; (opportunity)	1 - Agreed to in principle	As the external examiners noted, our students are generally satisfied with the option to pursue a two or three-week internship during the term. Shifting to a longer, for-credit, paid internship would require radically restructuring our curriculum and is not feasible. But we are keen to explore endowment-sponsored longer internships in the summer months. We will also seek to expand our Capital Current Summer Work Experience program.	<i>Journalism program head</i>	2024-25	N

12. Hiring a Research, Outreach and Engagement Officer (ROEO) to advance research, recruitment, and development aims; (opportunity)	<p>3. Agreed to in principle</p> <p>While we are not opposed to the establishment of an ROEO staff position, our major priority is to keep in place the two new staff positions we created in SJC on a pilot basis by splitting the former Resource Centre and Career Services position into two positions, one focused on managing the resource centre as well as coordinating SJC communications and the other a new Career Services officer position that supports the Journalism internship program and also builds out a career services program for our students. These two distinct positions are key to our strategic goals of creating a welcoming space for our students in our Resource Centre, and better communicating our successes and the accomplishments of our faculty, staff and students, to support recruitment efforts. And the career services position is key to fulfilling the FPA strategic plan's priority for linking the classroom and our curriculum more directly to the workplace. examiners.</p>	The program head will continue to advocate with the Dean of FPA that at the end of this pilot period, the Dean of FPA will agree to make these two positions permanent. Instead of an additional ROEO position, what we might consider reviewing the job descriptions for the Communications/Resource Centre position and the Career Services position to incorporate elements of the research, outreach and engagement position responsibilities proposed by the external	<p><i>Dean of FPA</i></p> <p><i>Journalism program head</i></p>	2024-25	N
13. Refocusing teaching capacity on unit priorities by phasing out or staggering low enrollment (n<10) offerings (e.g. to	<p>3 – Agreed to in principle</p> <p>With our hand forced by budget constraints and the directive to continually reduce our CI budget, we have already begun to phase out low enrollment courses. The concept of alternative year course offerings can be</p>	The program head will continue to work with colleagues to identify low enrolment courses that can be offered in alternative years.	<i>Journalism program head</i>	2024-25	N

alternative years); (opportunity)	difficult to manage because all of our beat reporting options are clustered in the fourth year, taking some of those out of rotation can make it more difficult for students to specialize.				
14. Strengthening internationalization through strategic hiring (e.g. a UNESCO Chair in Journalism and the Sustainable Development Goals), mentorship, and curriculum development. (opportunity)	<p>3 - Agreed to in principle</p> <p>We recognize the benefits of internationalization and agree that strategic hiring could help build a specialization for the journalism program. We have begun exploring the process for creating a UNESCO chair related to journalism and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.</p>	The journalism program will look for opportunities to cooperate with programs at universities in countries in the global south as well as with non-governmental organizations. Projects being considered include: a certificate program that would provide journalists living in exile with credentials that would help them file stories to Canadian journalism organizations; and exploring how to adapt the existing Media and International Development course to help prepare students for an international placement. Finally, we would like to encourage more international students to join our existing graduate program. Current funding constraints however mean we have access to limited scholarship support for international students. Developing the online Master's could be one way to increase international enrolment. A significant challenge to being able to move the program forward in this way is budget cuts: we have had to drop the Media and International Development course from the roster in the 2025 winter term because the faculty member who developed the course and teaches it is not being renewed in her term position.	<p><i>Journalism program head</i></p> <p><i>Dean of FPA</i></p>	2024-25 and ongoing	N
15. Conducting strategic enrollment outreach to minority-serving high schools to further diversify UG student body. (opportunity)	1 - Agreed to unconditionally	High school outreach in general is a top priority but we are also looking for ways to reach out in particular to racialized students to help them to envision journalism as a career option for them. One way to accomplish this is to have racialized faculty members in the program undertake these outreach activities. The Associate Professor who heads our Permanent Working Group, agreed some time ago to take the lead on this process. But given the absolute priority of	<i>Journalism program head</i>	2024-25 and ongoing	N

		<p>increasing enrolment across the board, we think the work of high school outreach needs to be shared with all members of the faculty.</p> <p>We have begun work on a plan to reach out to all high schools in the Ottawa region in the coming academic year and with assistance from the Undergraduate Recruitment Office, hope to expand that outreach into the GTA this year as well.</p> <p>Our strategy will also include proactively taking part each year in the Mini-Course Program. We will also explore establishing a high school journalism summer institute that would offer journalism skills training opportunities to high school students who are already in some way involved with media projects in their school.</p> <p>This summer we are offering a Podcast Journalism summer camp the week of Aug. 12-16, in partnership with Athletics. If that program is successful, we will expand it next year as a vehicle for reaching high school age children to engage them with journalism.</p>			
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