

**CARLETON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON
QUALITY ASSURANCE**

**Cyclical Review of the Master of Journalism Program
Executive Summary and Final Assessment**

This Executive Summary and Final Assessment Report of the cyclical review of Carleton's Master of Journalism program (MJ) are provided pursuant to articles 4.2.5-4.2.6 of the provincial Quality Assurance Framework and article 5.1.9.23-24 and 5.1.9.26-27 of Carleton's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP). This review was undertaken simultaneously with the review of the University's Bachelor of Journalism (BJ) program using the same external reviewers. The review of the BJ was completed in February 2014. The completion of the review of the MJ was delayed by the necessity of completing the previous OCGS periodic appraisal. This was completed in August 2015.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The MJ program is administered by Carleton University's School of Journalism and Communication, an academic unit of the Faculty of Public Affairs. As a consequence of the review, the MJ program was categorised by the Carleton University Committee on Quality Assurance (CUCQA) as being of **GOOD QUALITY** (Carleton's IQAP 5.1.9.12).

The external reviewers' report, submitted in May 2013, offered a positive assessment of the MJ program. The reviewers enthusiastically noted that "Carleton's School of Journalism is widely respected throughout the Canadian media industry, and beyond. The high profile of its graduates and the reputation of its program contribute mightily to Carleton's standing as a leading university in Canada." The report observed that the "the graduate students, in general, seem keen about their education and grateful for the chance to study at Carleton. They are also extremely well-funded compared to other schools in Ontario and Canada."

The report concluded that "Carleton's graduate curriculum offers students a strong foundation in the theory and history of journalism and offers ample opportunity to develop research and analytic/interpretative skills beyond those developed in an undergraduate program."

Within the context of this positive assessment, the report nonetheless made a few recommendations for the continuing enhancement of the graduate program. These recommendations were accepted by the School, the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs and Dean of the Faculty of Public Affairs in a response to the report of the external reviewers that was received by CUCQA in July 2013.

An Action Plan detailing how, when and by whom the recommendations would be addressed was submitted by the School on January 27th, 2014 and accepted by CUCQA on February 5th, 2014.

Given the delay in completing the review, CUCQA was able to receive a report on the implementation of the Action Plan. This was provided by the School on May 5th, 2015. This report was accepted by CUCQA on September 9th, 2015.

CARLETON UNIVERSITY
School of Journalism and Communication

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 27, 2014

TO: John Shepherd
Chair
Carleton University Committee on Quality Assurance

FROM: Christopher Waddell
Director
School of Journalism and Communication

CC: Andre Plourde
Dean
Faculty of Public Affairs

Re: Action plan regarding the outcome of cyclical review of 10-credit Master of Journalism program

I am writing in response to the December 24, 2014 memo from the Carleton University Committee on Quality Assurance that outlines the outcome of the cyclical review of the 10-Credit Master of Journalism program.

The School is pleased to note that the Committee has categorized the program as being of good quality and that there are no additional reports needed to be filed for the program.

As the self-study of the program noted in appendix E, the School has been engaged in an ongoing review of its 10-credit Master of Journalism program and is making annual adjustments to curriculum and other aspects of the program as that review progresses. Those changes form the basis of the action plan in response to the review and the Committee's positive assessment of the program.

In a general sense following the sections of the appendix the action plan includes:

Program Foundation

Program objectives and philosophy will be updated and addressed as part of the larger strategic plan for the School to develop over the coming 15 months. That plan will include both the Bachelor of Journalism and the Master of Journalism programs.

Program Identity

Work is underway on a major redesign and reorganization of the content and navigation of the current website for the School of Journalism and Communication. This work is being done by technical staff of the School in conjunction with faculty members and a consultant hired by the Faculty of Public Affairs to work on web site issues. It is expected the renewed and redesigned web site will be online and available for use by prospective students and students by the end of the winter term 2014.

Program elements

The Director will convene regular meetings of faculty teaching in the program as outlined in the recommendations to ensure course content stays on track with program content and identity and ensure the program's courses continue to function as a cohesive whole.

Program Fundamentals - updating our offerings

As detailed in option one under this heading, the School has completely revamped the content of its core reporting course JOUR5200 to include significant modules on multimedia and on current reporting practices in newsrooms. This was taught very successfully for the first time in the fall term 2013 and will continue.

A proposal is now at the School's curriculum committee for substantial changes to the core print and broadcast reporting courses JOUR5700 and JOUR5702 that would involve developing joint projects with the *Ottawa Citizen* and *CBC News*. If approved it will be introduced for second-year Masters students in the Fall term 2014.

The School also successfully offered a data journalism course for the first time in the fall term 2013 open to both Master of Journalism students and Bachelor of Journalism fourth-year students. The success of the course will be reviewed in coming weeks and offered again in the fall of 2014.

Proposals for several new special topics courses - including entrepreneurial journalism, peace journalism and interviewing - will be considered by the School's curriculum committee in the coming weeks. It is hoped that as resources permit, some of these new special topic courses will be taught beginning in the fall term of 2014.

The School has also received approval to eliminate the distinct field of print, broadcast and online that used to be part of the program but in practice have not been used in recent years in response to changes in the media. This is effective for the 2014-15 academic year.

Program requirements

As noted above the School is developing additional electives that it will offer as resources are available.

The School has also revamped the Masters Research Project process and developed revised standards to ensure more consistency in grading that took effect for students who entered the program in the fall of 2012. Beginning in the winter term 2014, MRPs will now be graded by an oral examination in addition to grading the video, audio, multimedia or print product produced by each student.

Date	Action	Participants
Sept 1, 2013	Introduction of data journalism course	Instructor teaching the course
Sept 1, 2103	Introduction of revised JOUR5200	Faculty teaching the course
Sept 1, 2013	Introduction of revised master Research Project guidelines	Director and Graduate Supervisor a after faculty approval in summer 2013.
May 15, 2014	Redesign of School web site	IT support in the school and the Dean's office
Early in fall and winter terms annually	Meeting of Graduate instructors to review course content and cohesiveness of MJ program	Director and faculty teaching in the Master of Journalism program
Sept 1, 2014	Introduction of new special topics courses for MJ students	As approved by school curriculum committee in February 2014 and as resources are made available
Sept 1, 2014	Elimination of fields in Master of Journalism program	Approved by university in January 2014
Sept 1, 2014	Introduce revisions to JOUR5700 and 5702	School curriculum committee and instructors teaching the course
June 30, 2105	Strategic plan for the journalism program involving both Bachelor of Journalism and Master of Journalism programs	School committee appointed by the Director