

Journalism Program Rationale

Components of a journalism program have been offered to SUNY Fredonia students through course work in the English and Communication departments. An interdisciplinary Journalism minor has been available for a number of years. However, the consistent demand for a journalism major from past, current, and prospective students has gone unmet to date.

Journalism education is an essential area of study. The free flow of news lies at the very core of a democracy. The training of journalists has always been important to insure a credible flow of information to the public. The increase in the number of news outlets and the development of new technologies has changed the traditional study of journalism and future journalists need to be prepared by being exposed to a multidisciplinary curriculum.

This new major takes advantage of existing strengths of SUNY Fredonia including the existing five majors within the Communication Department.

I. Process

While discussion of a potential journalism program has taken place at SUNY Fredonia for a number of years (including a proposal developed by the Communication Department in 2003 which was never submitted to University Senate due to staffing issues), in the late spring of 2006 President Hefner asked for a new proposal to be developed. This was partially a response to external program reviews both for the interdisciplinary Journalism minor and the Communication Department majors

Five faculty members (referred to henceforth as the working group) worked together throughout the 2006-07 academic year. They were

Ann Carden – Department of Communication
Jeanette McVicker – Department of English
Elmer Ploetz – Department of English
Robert Pyle – Department of Communication
Ted Schwalbe – Department of Communication

Meetings were held regularly to lay the foundation and goals for a journalism major. The working group was aided at times by Paul Schwartz (Dean of Arts and Humanities) and Melinda Karnes (Associate VPAA). A Journalism Program Mission/Philosophy Statement was created in November 2006. This was based on current trends in the journalism industry as well as current trends in journalism education. The working group examined a number of existing journalism programs as well as the standards of The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC).

The Media Advisory Council hosted a meeting of area journalism professionals in December 2006. Among the issues discussed were the kinds of skills needed by 21st century journalists, what content areas were important for prospective journalists, and how SUNY Fredonia could best prepare students who wanted to be the next generation of journalists.

A large meeting with Fredonia faculty from a variety of disciplines was held in February 2007. Faculty provided the working group with input from their disciplines regarding the kinds of knowledge they considered important for journalists to know as well as courses their departments currently offer or that might be developed that would be important for journalism students to take.

Two consultants were brought to campus in March 2007 to provide their expertise to the working group. Scott Martelle (Fredonia alum and staff writer/political correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*) and Janet Kolodzy

(Acting Chair and Associate Professor at Emerson College) spent several days meeting with faculty, students, and administrators. Discussions with the working group on a proposed curriculum also took place.

The final curriculum proposal was developed by the working group in fall 2007. The outside courses were submitted to department chairs of all listed departments and interdisciplinary studies program for their review. The Communication Department approved the entire proposal October 5, 2007.

II. Goals of the Program

The overarching aim of this program is to produce graduates who are professionally orientated and technically proficient, well-prepared for the world of work and also responsive critical thinkers and reflective practitioners who will make significant contributions in their chosen fields. Graduates from Journalism at Fredonia will be literate, with an effective and sophisticated command of grammar, vocabulary, structure & organization of language, and be properly prepared to move into the professional world of journalism.

The distinctiveness of Journalism at Fredonia lies in its combination of theoretical, historical and practice-based elements of study in order to generate a vivid and rich context in which to understand and develop an understanding of, and technical ability in, the practices of Journalism. This is enhanced by the opportunity provided to focus on skills driven pathways in either print, broadcast, or new media journalism. It aims to provide students with practical skills in respect of writing for both professional and creative contexts, research, media production, along with skills in information retrieval together with the ability to analyze and evaluate a range of texts, to edit and refine their own work and to organize their time effectively as well as other appropriate professional capabilities. Students will also be encouraged from the beginning of the program to become involved in journalistic activity both within the campus through participation with campus media as well as off campus through participation in internships.

The three pillars upon which the program has been built are interdisciplinary course work, a global approach to journalism, and a convergent approach to journalism. These pillars are critical for a journalism program today.

The program aims:

1. To provide students with the abilities, competencies and skills necessary to become professional practitioners within the field of journalism.
2. To enable students to engage critically with the intellectual, ethical and legal parameters of the work of the journalist.
3. To help students to develop a range of intellectual skills based on an understanding of journalism, including to conceptualize, theorize, analyze, criticize, evaluate, reflect and understand a range of themes and issues relevant to the program of study.
4. To help students to develop practical skills with respect to media production, writing for professional and creative contexts in a variety of formats and for a variety of platforms; these include basic research skills, idea development and proposal writing, news making and management, shorthand, scripting and storyboarding, production skills and others as appropriate.
5. To ensure students acquire a range of more general skills in problem solving and effective communication, so as to facilitate access to a broad range of educational and employment opportunities after graduation.
6. To provide a reflexive environment for students and staff which develops students' personal as well as employment relevance, and which delivers support and learning opportunities that are responsive to the needs of students from diverse (educational) backgrounds.
7. To encourage students to progressively take ownership and direction of their learning so that they may develop as independent life-long learners.
8. To encourage a prevailing ethos of professional, social and ethical responsibility within the learning environment and in the students.

The educational aims of the program are encompassed within the program structure. It is not intended that the students will cover the aims individually, but rather that they will be integral to the program and will be developed throughout the period of study.

The educational aims are consistent with the requirements set forth by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. While accreditation of the Journalism major at Fredonia is not a short-term goal, following the guidelines and standards set forth by ACEJMC was recommended by external consultants as well as the group which put the major together.

III. Resources

The new major will require the addition of two new faculty members to staff the courses taught. The Communication Department is in the process of searching for the first faculty member who will begin teaching journalism courses fall 2008. The second new faculty member will be added to the program depending on enrollment and need.

The new major will also require additional equipment resources. A journalism computer lab will need to be created. This should be an ITAB "A" lab and ideally located either in McEwen Hall or Thompson Hall. Additional video field and audio equipment will also need to be purchased.

Journalism Catalog Listing

(to be inserted in Communication after majors A-E)

F. Journalism Major: 42 credit hours (including core requirements) + 18 credit hours of outside courses + minor/study abroad

Provides students with the means to fully participate in and analyze the world around them in order to report it ethically, critically, and fully. The multidisciplinary approach places emphasis on critical thinking, research, and reporting in relation to word, image, and sound. A convergent approach allows student to learn and practice journalism across a variety of distribution modes allowing for employment opportunities in print, electronic, and web-based journalism organizations.

Requirements:	Hrs.
Communication Core	8

Plus Journalism Major:

34 credit hours – at least 17 hours at SUNY Fredonia

Group A – Major Core – 19 credit hours

COMM 130	Foundations in Journalism	3
COMM 230	News Gathering	3
COMM 240	Storytelling: Words, Images, Sound	3
COMM 250	Critical Analysis	3
COMM 420	Communication Law and Ethics	3
COMM 440	Journalism Convergence Capstone	4

Group B – 6 credit hours – one of the following two-course sequences

COMM 341	Audio/Video Advanced Tools	3
COMM 342	Audio/Video Advanced Production	3
	Or	
COMM 346	Print/Digital Editing and Design	3
COMM 347	Print/Digital Narrative	3

Group C – 9 credit hours – one course from each of the following 3 categories

C1 Communication Experiential Training		
Short-term study abroad		3
COMM 470	FRS/WNYF/Leader Practicum	3
COMM 480	Internship	3 (minimum)

C2 Theory Courses

COMM 102	Mass Media and Society	3
COMM 201	Rhetoric and Criticism	3
COMM 221	Interpersonal Communication	3
COMM 222	Principles of Public Relations	3
COMM 295	Research and Survey Methods	3
COMM 301	Group Communication	3
COMM 359	Special Topics in Media – if applicable	3
COMM 385	International Media	3
COMM 460	Organizational Communication	3
COMM 465	Intercultural Communication	3
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C3 Skills Courses	
COMM 110-119 – 3 mini courses	3
COMM 251 Audio Production I	3
COMM 255 Studio Production	3
COMM 312 Multimedia Integration	3
COMM 367 Opinions in Journalism	3
COMM 459 Special Topics in Media Prod. – if applicable	3
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Plus Outside Courses – 18 credits – at least 3 credits in each of the following categories. Up to 12 credits may be used to satisfy CCC requirements.

Global Studies

HIST 101 World History I	3
HIST 102 World History II	3
HIST 135 World Cultures	3
HIST 261 Islamic Civilization	3
HIST 264 East Asian Civilizations	3
HIST 273 Africa Since 1880	3
HIST 283 Latin America: Revolution and Reform	3
HIST 311 Europe in the Modern World	3
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Science and the Environment

CHEM 107 Chemistry for Consumers	3
GEO 139 The Mass Extinctions	1
GEO 175 The Thirsty Planet	1
GEO 180 Weather and Climate	1
ESCI 105 Global Environmental Issues	3
HIST 310 World Environmental History	3
ESCI 410 Environmental Assessment	3
BIOL 115 Environmental Biology	3
PHYS 205 Science and Civilization	3
HIST 352 Environmental History of North America	3
SOC 215 Introduction to Public Health	3

Economics/Statistics

POLI,PSY,ECON,SOC,STAT 200 Statistics	3
ECON 201 Principles of Macroeconomics	3
STAT 150 Statistical Ideas	3
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Culture

AMST 210 American Popular/Mass Cultures	3
HIST 339 20th Century American Culture	3
POLI 371 Civil Rights and Liberties	3
INDS 105 Intro. American Indian Studies	3
SOC 316 Minority Groups	3
ENGL 296 American Identities	3
ANTH 300 Sex and Gender	3
HIST 359 Ethnicity/Race	3

HIST/INDS 225 Intro to Latin History/Culture	3
HIST 353 U.S. Consumer Culture	3
HIST 343 Civil Rights Movement	3
PSY 255 Psychology of Women	3
SOC 335 Sociology of Sport	3
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Government and Legislature

POLI 120 American Politics	3
POLI 150 U.S. and World Affairs	3
PHIL 228 American Philosophy	3
POLI 276 Law and Society	3
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Arts, Education, and Philosophies

ENGL 206 Survey of American Literature	3
ENGL 207 Drama and Film	3
ARTH 345 Media Criticism	3
THEA 114 Intro Performing Arts	3
ARTH 102 Art in Culture 1400-present	3
MUS 270 History of American Pop Music	3
EDU 215 Education in American Society	3
PHIL 105 Philosophical Ideas	3
PHIL 115 Philosophical Inquiry	3
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