

Comprehensive Program Review Report



Program Review - Journalism

Program Summary

2022-2023

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What are the strengths of your area?: A major strength of the Journalism program is that it offers students hands-on, real-world experience through its JOUR 130/131 and Editorial Board media practicum courses. Students can learn the ins and outs of news writing, copyediting, digital journalism, web design, interviewing skills and more, and see their works published in the student news publication, The Campus. The Campus student news publication has been an award-winning paper since its first issue in 1933. Continuing the legacy of The Campus is an important part of the Journalism program and COS campus history. Students also create a digital portfolio of work samples as their culminating experience that can be used to gain employment and internships. This experience is invaluable and prepares students for the reality of the journalism workforce. This course has an overall success rate of 95% among 19 students throughout the last academic cycle.

An additional strength to note is the available gear journalism students have access to. The journalism department has acquired state of the art/professional grade tech including but not limited to: DSLR cameras and lenses, recording devices, mics, video camera, tripods, iPads, filming rigs, and much more. The journalism department has also established a great working relationship with the COS Marketing Department and have worked together to film broadcast segments—such as The Breakdown and Giant Sports Weekly—in the professional film studio and provide student staff members of The Campus with professional headshots.

To date, the Journalism department continues to maintain a high overall success rate of 82.7% among 169 total grades and awarded a total of 7 AA-Ts in the 2021-22 academic year, which is an increase from years prior. Across modalities, the department boasts an 80.6% online success rate and a 90.9% overall success rate for face-to-face courses. Hispanic students were particularly successful this last academic cycle with an overall success rate (excluding EWs) of 84.8% among 105 total grades awarded, while White students had an overall success rate of 82.9% among 41 total grades awarded.

What improvements are needed?: Overall, enrollment in journalism courses is down significantly from previous years. In the 2019-2020 academic year total enrollment was 265 students. For the 2021-22 academic year, enrollment has dropped to only 169 students. Currently (Fall 22), across 6 course offerings there are only 47 total enrolled students at census. Increasing enrollment is a much-needed improvement at this time. A potential consideration is to revisit course offerings and their days/times and attempt to select peak enrollment days/times so students are more likely to enroll.

The Journalism Department is in desperate need of a full-time faculty member. This faculty member would need to revise and update the current curriculum to better reflect 21st-century journalism and develop a plan to aggressively market the program to the COS student population. Specifically, the Journalism program requires recruitment efforts and assistance from the COS marketing department to increase enrollment, total section offerings, and

awareness. Additionally, the department offers a Skills Certificate in Media Communication that is not actively marketed to students, and required courses are not offered consistently.

JOUR 011: Intro to Digital Photography is also currently struggling with meeting enrollment. This may be due to the time of day the course is offered (late afternoon) and due to lack of promotion/awareness. Another factor may be that students that are interested in photography do not know to search in the journalism department for photography course offerings. In addition, the course is now in direct competition with a newly added art course, ART080: Intro to Digital Photo which is offered completely online. Adjunct instructors have also indicated that JOUR 011 did quite well enrollment wise on the COS Hanford campus in previous years, perhaps a section could be offered there to see if it assists in boosting numbers.

Another recommended improvement would be to offer an additional section of the IGETC-approved course JOUR 007: Mass Communication completely online. When offered in this modality the course enrollment is much higher. In the current Fall 2022 hybrid offering enrollment is extremely low (only 13 students), which may be due to the course having Friday meetings. This is a survey course that introduces different forms of media and enrolls the largest number of students. Offering one face-to-face section and one additional online section, along with promotion/marketing, may pique students' interest in the subject and funnel students into other journalism offerings and help stabilize and increase enrollment.

Describe any external opportunities or challenges.: Once again, a challenge the department is currently facing is a lack of awareness among the COS student population. An aggressive marketing strategy must be developed and initiated so sections avoid cancellation and enrollment can begin to return to pre-covid numbers, and ultimately result in consistent departmental growth.

Due to the absence of a full-time journalism instructor current Journalism students/majors are unable to attend conferences and professional activities as they have in previous years, such as the JACC conference (Journalism Association of Community Colleges). Conferences such as these provided past journalism students the opportunity to network, receive training, and enter competitions. Current journalism students do not have access to these conferences at this time, as there is no full-time faculty advisor that may attend with them.

Another external obstacle is the 'changing' of the JOUR major. We are now seeing 'social media writing' degrees and the increase of technology in JOURN courses with the inclusion of moving papers off-line. As such, numbers are decreasing in student enrollment. The COS JOURN program needs revamping and/or disbursement of particular courses to other departments for student who are interested in the major. There is the possibility of a CTE and the area Dean and Division Chair are in discussions regarding the aforementioned.

Overall SLO Achievement: The SLO achievement was mixed, especially in the classes that were not The Campus. Four different SLOs were accessed in 2020 and 2021 with all of them coming in about 10 percentage points lower than previous measurements. This could be that students were distracted with the ongoing pandemic (during this time frame all classes were still remote), they were still not adjusted to remote learning or that they knew they could bail with a late drop if they needed to. The results may be skewed a bit by students who just disappeared or did mediocre work knowing they would probably drop the class.

The Campus class dropped a bit, too. That certainly was due to the lack of in person interaction during COVID, the loss of the full-time instructor, staffing this Fall and the drop in course attendance.

Changes Based on SLO Achievement: It is assumed that remote teaching will become more commonplace for JOURN programs. The challenge will be to encourage students to embrace this type of learning and to see the benefits. I think I would coach students more on what they specifically need to do to succeed online. Many were unprepared for the sudden shift. Some were unable or unwilling to solve their problems (technical, personal, etc).

I was surprised to learn that some students never enable Canvas announcements or do not check Canvas every day. A more rigorous and specific unit that takes them through the process might work even though many resources were provided. I am a big believer in the On Course methods and would like to see the entire college embrace this model.

Better SLOs that gauge real understanding of news literacy and the big effect social media has had. Some but not all social media is journalism. Many students do not understand where it begins and ends. By and large they are not newspaper readers. Some students fall in love with the tech (which is OK and understandable) without realizing how important it is to write well and communicate effectively.

Overall PLO Achievement: Program outcomes were met, but there is still room for improvement. The statistics for the measurements were passable but much lower than I would like. Part of this may be student fascination with TikTok and disinterest in journalism.

Though each of the classes work together, there are two distinct parts to the program: The Campus and the rest of the classes. Student learning outcomes for the lecture classes are serviceable. The student learning outcomes for The Campus are harder because of the different roles on staff. Students are lumped together whether they are a reporter or photographer or social media manager. Though there are skills they all should know, they are sometimes reluctant to come out of their silos to attain these skills.

Changes Based on PLO Achievement: I would like to see more rigorous project-based PLOs perhaps dealing with social media and news literacy that could then be publicized and also be used for recruiting for The Campus.

Outcome cycle evaluation: Because Journalism is currently only taught by adjuncts in JOURN and the COMM programs, the task of outcomes always falls on one person who is sometimes pulled in different directions. Therefore, multiple individuals must work together to meet SLO's, PLO's etc...

Action: FT Journalism instructor

Replacement for retiring professor.

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Implementation Timeline: 2021 - 2022

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Identify related course/program outcomes: This position is directly related to every part the Journalism program outcomes and the college mission statement.

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Vice President of Academic Services, Dean and Division Chair of Languages and Communication.

Rationale (With supporting data): Without a full-time journalism instructor, there is no journalism program. The position must be FT for stability and to offer students a successful experience. Each piece of this small program supports the other. For instance, Mass Communication and Film in Society and Culture are IGETC classes that also feed into the student news media classes. Though much has changed with technology, journalism is still vital to values citizens hold. Students remain interested and most colleges have college newspapers, albeit online. We all live in a media saturated world. Enrollment in the program has remained steady for such a small curriculum. The enrollment during this COVID period has increased. The program offers students life skills and is aimed at journalism majors and non-journalism majors alike.

The Campus student news media has existed since 1933.

Priority: High

Safety Issue: No

External Mandate: No

Safety/Mandate Explanation:

Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2018-2021
District Objective 1.1 - The District will increase FTES by 1.75% over the three years
District Objective 2.1 - Increase the percentage of students who earn an associate degree or certificate (CTE and Non-CTE) by 5 percentage points over three years
District Objective 2.2 - Increase the number of students who transfer to a four-year institution by 10 percent over three years
District Objective 2.3 - By 2021, increase the percentage of students who complete transfer-level English by 15 percentage points and transfer-level math by 10 percentage point with their first year.
District Objective 2.4 - By 2021, Increase the percentage of CTE students who achieve their employment objectives by 5 percentage points
District Objective 3.1 - By 2021, increase the placement rates into transfer-level English and transfer-level math for targeted groups that fall below the District Average.
District Objective 3.2 - By 2021, increase the percentage of students in targeted groups who complete transfer-level English (by 10 percentage points) and transfer-level math (by 5 percentage points) within their first year
District Objective 4.1 - Increase the use of data for decision-making at the District and department/unit level

Action: Online classes

Offer additional sections of journalism online.

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Implementation Timeline: 2021 - 2022

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Identify related course/program outcomes: Program Outcomes • Articulate the power and effect of mass media on culture and society. • Create quality journalism that reflects professional standards. • Understand and apply concepts of critical thinking, effective leadership, hierarchy, and basic media ethics and law.

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Cynthia Johnson, Division Chair; Judy House Menezes, Journalism professor/adviser

Program Review - Journalism

Rationale (With supporting data): Many two-year journalism programs offer online courses. Online courses reach students who are not currently being served (pre-covid)

Priority: High

Safety Issue: No

External Mandate: No

Safety/Mandate Explanation: Though there is not an external mandate, there may be very soon due to covid. Surprisingly, enrollment in the program increased with online classes. Even when the pandemic ends, the program should offer some online classes to serve a student population that was not served prior to covid.

Action: Add curriculum

Write curriculum for an additional two sequential semesters for the student news media class so students who choose to may gain experience in several skills such as reporting, podcasting, photography, videography, editing, social media, and leadership positions instead of having to concentrate on one skill. This would also bring the program in line with other two-year programs across the state.

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Implementation Timeline: 2021 - 2022

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Identify related course/program outcomes:

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Judy House Menezes, professor/adviser

Rationale (With supporting data):

Priority: High

Safety Issue: No

External Mandate: No

Safety/Mandate Explanation: