

JOURNALISM FOUNDATIONS

Journalism Program, School of Communication and Information, UH Mānoa

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ABOUT THE JOURNALISM PROGRAM

NUMBER OF FACULTY: 2

NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 100+ MAJORS

NUMBER OF GRADUATES EVERY YEAR: ~20

JOURNALISM CLASSES HAVE BEEN TAUGHT AT UH SINCE 1926

WHAT WE DID, HOW AND WHY

We were starting at near-scratch in this program, with few foundational assessment resources in place. But we were able to show — in a relatively short amount of time — how much can be accomplished if assessment is made a priority in a program. In less than a single academic year, we were able to collaboratively create new SLOs, a new curriculum map, and create a new student-leadership council, all of which prompted many important discussions and reflections about our program about what we are doing, how, and why. We also were able to learn from these assessments what we really valued and wanted to instill in our students, which led to more clarity and what we need to do next, and long-term, but also led us to undertake initiatives that we might not have otherwise.

NEW STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Over several months, meetings, and debates, we refined our programmatic SLOs from aspirational yet abstract aims at doing public good to much more concrete learning objectives that we will be able to define in specific measurable terms, which we then will use as assessment tools to hold our students and our faculty accountable for achieving specific shared curricular objectives, ensuring alignment.

As part of these new objectives, students earning a BA in Journalism will be able to demonstrate professional competence in:

1. SLO 1 — Telling the Story of Journalism
2. SLO 2 — Writing and Reporting
3. SLO 3 — Multimedia Making
4. SLO 4 — And, Cultural Literacy

... with detailed checklists and rubrics in place for each SLO.

NEW CURRICULUM MAP

Our new approach included aligning with the 12 AEJMC (Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication) Values & Competencies that directly connect with accreditation standards. Only a portion of the map is shown, per space constraints.

I = Introduced, R= Reinforced, and M = Mastery,
A = Assessment evidence collected for programmatic data analysis.

REQ Jour class	150	200	250	300	330	460	481
Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press in America;	I A						
Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;		I A	I	R	R A		M A
Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;		I		I A	R		M A
Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;		I	I	R	R		M
Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;	I	I	I A	R A	R	R	M A

NEW STUDENT COUNCIL

At the start of Fall 2023, the Jour faculty picked 10 top-performing students to serve as its inaugural Journalism Student Leadership Council, providing 1 representative for every 10 majors. In Fall, this council made two major proposals, 1. A request to hire an Indigenous Journalism professor to teach a class on that topic in the Spring, and 2. A request to start a new Instagram channel to publish their work and to share campus information. In Spring, this council proposed 3. To host a campus-wide Journalism-focused event, and, 4. Develop a professional mentorship program. To date, we have successfully responded to all of those requests, by: 1. Recruiting a Native Hawaiian journalist to teach the Indigenous Journalism class in the Spring, 2. Creating an active IG channel, with more than 60 posts to date, 3. Creating a major campus-wide event in April, and 4. Created the mentorship program with 3 pro mentors. Also, these students were active participants in helping us to shape SLOs.

STRATEGIC SUCCESSES

Our strategy was focused on getting this tough work done with as much feedback from stakeholders as we could gather. Most importantly, as a way to reduce inertia, we considered these efforts as iterative and ones that could be updated, which took away some of the pressure to make an eternal document.

NEXT STEPS

1. Create Journalism Community Leadership Council, bringing in more professionals.
2. Deepen the details on the Curriculum Map to add class-level SLOs that align with the overall vision. We want concrete objectives at all levels.