

## MEDIA STUDIES JOURNALISM MINOR

### ASSESSMENT REPORT ACADEMIC YEAR 2018 – 2019 REPORT DUE DATE: 11/01/2019

- Who should submit the report? – All majors, minors (including interdisciplinary minors), as well as graduate and non-degree granting certificate programs of the College of Arts and Sciences.
- Programs can combine assessment reports for a major and a minor program into one aggregate report as long as the mission statements, program learning outcome(s) evaluated, methodology applied to each, and the results are clearly delineated in separate sections.
- Undergraduate, graduate and certificate programs must submit separate reports
- It is recommended that each assessment report not exceed 10 pages. Additional materials (optional) can be added as appendices.
- A curricular map should be submitted along with each assessment report (we suggest that the curricular map should be informed by recent assessment outcomes).

#### Some useful contacts:

1. Prof. Alexandra Amati, FDCD, Arts – [adamati@usfca.edu](mailto:adamati@usfca.edu)
2. Prof. John Lendvay, FDCD, Sciences – [lendvay@usfca.edu](mailto:lendvay@usfca.edu)
3. Prof. Mark Meritt, FDCD, Humanities – [meritt@usfca.edu](mailto:meritt@usfca.edu)
4. Prof. Michael Jonas, FDCD, Social Sciences – [mrjonas@usfca.edu](mailto:mrjonas@usfca.edu)
5. Prof. Suparna Chakraborty, AD Academic Effectiveness – [schakraborty2@usfca.edu](mailto:schakraborty2@usfca.edu)

#### Academic Effectiveness Annual Assessment Resource Page:

<https://myusf.usfca.edu/arts-sciences/faculty-resources/academic-effectiveness/assessment>

Email to submit the report: [assessment\\_cas@usfca.edu](mailto:assessment_cas@usfca.edu)

Important: Please write the name of your program or department in the subject line.

For example: FineArts\_Major (if you decide to submit a separate report for major and minor);

FineArts\_Aggregate (when submitting an aggregate report)

## I. LOGISTICS

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1. Please indicate the name and email of the program contact person to whom feedback should be sent (usually Chair, Program Director, or Faculty Assessment Coordinator).

Teresa Moore, Journalism minor program director, mooret@usfca.edu

2. Please indicate if you are submitting report for (a) a Major, (b) a Minor, (c) a Major and Minor aggregated report (in which case, each should be explained in a separate paragraph as in this template), (d) a Graduate or (e) a Certificate Program

This is the first program assessment report submitted for the Journalism minor.

3. Please note that a Curricular Map should accompany every assessment report. Have there been any revisions to the Curricular Map?

Yes, although this is the first program assessment we've submitted. My predecessor retired without collecting or turning in material for the minor assessment.

Here is the Curricular Map we are in the process of submitting to the Curriculum Committee:

Production Foundations:

Multimedia Storytelling OR Video Production OR Audio Production (4 units) PLO Production

Journalism I (4 units) PLOs Production, Theory

Upper Division Production Electives (2 classes/8 units)

Magazine PLOs Production, Theory

Arts Reporting and Reviews PLO Production, Theory

Investigative Reporting (new class being submitted to Curriculum Committee) PLOs Production, Theory, History  
Photojournalism PLO Production  
Documentary Production PLO Production  
Capstone  
MS 420 American Journalism Ethics senior seminar PLOs Theory, History

## II. MISSION STATEMENT & PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

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1. Were any changes made to the program mission statement since the last assessment cycle in October 2018? Kindly state “Yes” or “No.” Please provide the current mission statement below. If you are submitting an aggregate report, please provide the current mission statements of both the major and the minor programs

- Mission Statement (Major/Graduate/Certificate):

- Mission Statement (Minor):

**This is the first Mission Statement the Journalism program has submitted:**

Journalism Minor Mission Statement

The University of San Francisco journalism minor prepares students in effective journalism production and ethical industry practices. The program weds the four core tenets of the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics – “seek truth and report it,” “minimize harm,” “act independently,” and “be accountable and transparent” with the Jesuit mission of a social responsibility to “communicate and apply knowledge to a world shared by all people and held in trust for future generations.”

We believe that a healthy and just society depends upon informed and engaged citizens. In the spirit of the University's Jesuit values, we see journalism as a service profession. Well-trained, compassionate and brave journalists are essential to

- helping people see and understand beyond their own experiences
- hauling suffering and injustice into the light and holding the powerful accountable
- verifying and defending shared facts that people can trust and act on
- fostering spaces for productive public discourse

The critical thinking, research, writing and multimedia skills essential to good journalism are sought after in many fields. We attract and educate students from majors throughout the university. We are proud that our program has prepared students for careers in many fields, including entertainment, education, politics, marketing, management, and many forms of journalism.

**2. Were any changes made to the program learning outcomes (PLOs) since the last assessment cycle in October 2018? Kindly state "Yes" or "No." Please provide the current PLOs below. If you are submitting an aggregate report, please provide the current PLOs for both the major and the minor programs.**

Note: It is expected that PLOs will vary in level of mastery between different programs in the same discipline (e. g., a major and minor in the same subject area). Major revisions in the program learning outcomes need to go through the College Curriculum Committee (contact: Professor Joshua Gamson, [gamson@usfca.edu](mailto:gamson@usfca.edu)). Minor editorial changes are not required to go through the College Curriculum Committee.

- PLOs (Major/Graduate/Certificate):

- PLOs (Minor):

**This is the first set of PLOs the minor has submitted:**

**Production:**

- Students' work shows an understanding of the differences between journalism and other media, namely that the main ingredients of responsible journalism are verified facts presented clearly to an audience.
- Students can gather, evaluate, verify and contextualize information from a variety of sources – direct observation, interviews and secondary sources and documents.
- Students are able to convey information in a fair, accurate and engaging manner, regardless of medium.

- Students gain experience reporting on the record stories on and off campus.
- Students can fairly and accurately report the perspectives and experiences of sources like and unlike themselves.

## Theory

- Students should be able to distinguish the differences in standards, practices and ethics between journalism and other types of media that may be mistaken for journalism.
- Students should understand the responsibilities of journalists in a just society.
- Students should develop an ethical foundation for dealing with the challenges journalists face in a rapidly changing media landscape.
- Students should understand the complex relationships among journalists, institutions, corporations and individuals and the economic, technologic and societal pressures affecting how journalists do their jobs.

## History

- Students should understand major developments in journalism, e.g. the First Amendment, the evolution of investigative reporting, the penny press, integration of newsrooms, contributions of women, people of color and LGBTQ journalists, the digital revolution, attacks on journalists and facts.
- Students should learn about high (e.g. Ida B. Wells Barnett, Watergate, Randy Shilts) and low (e.g. ignoring or misrepresenting important stories, fabrication scandals) milestones in journalism history and their societal impacts.
- Students should understand the history, ramifications and applications of the First Amendment as they apply to journalists and everyone else.

3. State the particular program learning outcome(s) you assessed for the academic year 2018-2019. What rubric did you use?

### The Role of Rubrics

The rubric is the single most important thing you need for assessment, and putting time and thinking into designing a good rubric is going to make the entire process a lot easier, faster, and meaningful. Your rubric should break down your chosen PLO into the smallest measurable components, so that the assessment of each piece of work becomes linear and easy, and the calibration among different faculty assessing more

objective. If you still have to debate a while whether that one line of the rubric has been fulfilled or not, chances are your rubric item is still an aggregate and can be broken down further into smaller components. Once you have made a detailed rubric, then not only the “grading” work will be faster and straightforward, but at the end of it you will have data that is significantly more meaningful. For example, some parts of the PLO may be in tiptop shape while others may need to be massaged or tweaked, with more attention given to that particular item in class. Conversely, your data may show you that the PLO itself is not what you thought it should be—it may be that it duplicates something other PLOs include or that a crucial part of what you teach is getting lost in the cracks between your PLOs. So do make sure that the rubric is as detailed and thorough as you possibly can manage (a short rubric in fact makes the grading longer, as counterintuitive as that seems).

- **PLO(s) being assessed (Major/Graduate/Certificate):**

- **PLO(s) being assessed (Minor)**

In academic year 2018-2019, we had a new term appointee teaching J1 in the fall and spring and a new Special Topic, Investigative Reporting, in the spring. Since it was his first year in the program and my first as the new director, I chose to assess the journalism courses I taught that year: MS 420, American Journalism Ethics (Theory PLO) for Fall 2018 and Magazine (Production PLO) for Spring 2019.

**Journalism Minor Learning Outcome #2: Theory  
Assessment completed by Teresa Moore  
Course: MS 420 American Journalism Ethics Fall 2018**

**Instructors:** Use this grid to track the success of each student (all students must be included) across each learning outcome. This can be done while grading papers or exams (add a hash mark for each student on each criteria to the grid as you grade and then total up each column) or as an independent assessment activity. Using this grid we should be able to track the % of students who are succeeding at each level, and overall, in the learning goal.

Grades represent:

- A – student has complete mastery
- B – student demonstrates good skills
- C – student has passing skills
- F – student is not passing these criteria

N = number of students in this category; % = percentage of the total accounted for by this column (e.g. % of A's in a, b, c)

| <b>Learning Outcome #2: Theory</b>  | A  | B  | C | D-F |
|---|----|----|---|-----|
| a. Students should be able to distinguish the differences in standards, practices and ethics between journalism and other types of media that may be mistaken for journalism.                                       | 6  | 0  |   |     |
| b. Students should understand the responsibilities of journalists in a just society.  | 4  | 2  |   |     |
| c. Students should develop an ethical foundation for dealing with the challenges journalists face in a rapidly changing media landscape.  | 3  | 3  |   |     |
| d. Students should understand the complex relationships among journalists, institutions, corporations and individuals and the economic, technologic and societal pressures affecting how journalists do their jobs. | 4  | 2  |   |     |
| Totals N (%)  | 71 | 29 |   |     |

### **Journalism Minor Learning Outcome #1: Production**

**Assessment completed by Teresa Moore**

**Course: MS 325 Magazine Spring 2019**

**Instructors:** Use this grid to track the success of each student (all students must be included) across each learning outcome. This can be done while grading papers or exams (add a hash mark for each student on each criteria to the grid as you grade and then total up each column) or as an independent assessment activity. Using this grid we should be able to track the % of students who are succeeding at each level, and overall, in the learning goal.

Grades represent:

A – student has complete mastery

B – student demonstrates good skills

C – student has passing skills

F – student is not passing these criteria

N = number of students in this category; % = percentage of the total accounted for by this column (e.g. % of A's in a, b, c)

| <b>Learning Outcome #1: Production</b>  | A | B | C | D-F |
|---|---|---|---|-----|
| a. Student's work shows an understanding of the differences between journalism and other media, namely that the main ingredients of responsible journalism are verified facts presented clearly to an audience. | 9 | 3 | 1 | 1   |
| b. Student gathers, evaluates, verifies and contextualizes information from a variety of sources –  | 7 | 5 | 1 | 1   |

|  |    |    |   |   |
|--|----|----|---|---|
| direct observation, interviews and secondary sources and documents.  |    |    |   |   |
| c. Student is able to convey information in a fair, accurate and engaging manner, regardless of medium.              | 6  | 6  | 1 | 1 |
| d. Student gains experience reporting on the record stories on and off campus.                                       | 6  | 6  | 1 | 1 |
| e. Students can fairly and accurately report the perspectives and experiences of sources like and unlike themselves. | 6  | 6  | 1 | 1 |
| Totals N (%)   | 49 | 37 | 7 | 7 |

### III. METHODOLOGY

Describe the methodology that you used to assess the PLO(s).

For example, “the department used questions that were inputted in the final examination pertaining directly to the <said PLO>. An independent group of faculty (not teaching the course) then evaluated the responses to the questions and gave the students a score for responses to those questions.”



**Important Note** – WSCUC advises us to use “direct methods,” which consist of a direct evaluation of a student work product. “Indirect methods” like exit interviews or student surveys can be used only as additional complements to a direct method.

For any program with fewer than 10 students: If you currently have fewer than 10 students in your program (rendering your statistical analysis biased due to too few data points), it is fine to describe a multi-year data collection strategy here. It would be important to remember that every 3 years, we would expect you to have enough data to conduct a meaningful analysis.

**Important:** *Please attach, at the end of this report, a copy of the rubric used for assessment.*

- **Methodology used (Major/Graduate/Certificate):**

- **Methodology used (Minor):**

There were six students in MS 420 in Fall 2018. In addition to two essay exams, seminar discussions and presentations, they produced critical analysis research papers that were also assessed for the Media Studies major that semester.

There were 14 students in MS 325 in Spring 2019. They produced a variety of types of feature stories, workshopped drafts with peers, and uploaded finished and illustrated work to the Media Studies Department Magazine. Students were assessed on the quality of their portfolio of work at the end of the semester.

## IV. RESULTS & MAJOR FINDINGS

What are the major takeaways from your assessment exercise?

This section asks you to highlight the results of the exercise. Pertinent information here would include:

- a. how well students mastered the outcome at the level they were intended to,
- b. any trends noticed over the past few assessment cycles, and
- c. the levels at which students mastered the outcome based on the rubric used.

To address this question, among many other options, one option is to use a table showing the distribution, for example:

| Level  | Percentage of Students |
|--|------------------------|
| Complete Mastery of the outcome                  | 8.7%                   |
| Mastered the outcome in most parts               | 20.3%                  |
| Mastered some parts of the outcome               | 66%                    |
| Did not master the outcome at the level intended | 5%                     |

**Results (Major/Graduate/Certificate):**

**Results (Minor):**

For the Theory PLO assessed in MS 420 F18, 71% of the students showed Complete Mastery of the Outcome and 29% exhibited good skills.

Because this class was under-enrolled, but essential for several graduating seniors, I was allowed to teach it at a reduced load. Four of the students were journalism minors and

two of those were from majors (Politics, Biology) outside of Media Studies. The remaining two students were Media Studies majors who were not in the Journalism minor but taking the class for MS senior seminar credit. I spent a couple of weeks bringing the students up to speed on developing their research proposals and lit reviews, but overall, I was pleased with the quality of their research and analysis. They were particularly good at using social media to contact working journalists (including several from the New York Times) for industry perspectives on their research questions.

For the Production PLO assessed in MS 325 S19, 49% of the students exhibited Complete Mastery; 37% exhibited good skills, 7% (=1 student) exhibited passing skills and 7% (=1 student) did not pass the criteria. The two students who fell short were graduating seniors who needed the class. Although each had taken a journalism class the schools they'd attended prior to coming to USF, neither had enough basic skills – or interest in developing them – to keep up with the rest of the class. In the first case, the student, who was reporting to a military assignment within a week of graduation, buckled down in the final 10 days of the semester and produced something good enough to pass the class. In the second case, I granted the student an incomplete with a deadline of Nov. 1 for completing the project. The student came in for an appointment in September and we set a schedule for what he needed to do and when he needed to get the work in. I didn't hear from him again until Nov. 1 and now, during the last week of this semester, I am trying to fit time in to read his transcripts and drafts along with the work of students in my current classes. This is another “I just need this class to graduate” situation and I do feel pressure not to fail him, although his work up to this day has been substandard. My takeaway is that I will not grant another “Incomplete” in this situation again.

The students in the A and B categories did an excellent job of holding each other accountable in their peer reviews and were thoughtful in their critiques of the professional literary journalism we studied as a class. What separated the A students from the B students was the greater initiative they brought to their reporting and the higher quality of their writing.

## V. CLOSING THE LOOP: ACTION PLAN BASED ON ASSESSMENT RESULTS

1. Based on your analysis in Section 4, what are the next steps that you are planning in order to achieve the desired level of mastery in the assessed learning outcome? This section could also address more long-term planning that your department/program is considering and does not require any changes to be implemented in the next academic year itself.

- **Closing the Loop (Major/Graduate/Certificate):**

- **Closing the Loop (Minor):**

Overall, I feel good about the outcomes in those two classes. Students were engaged and they worked hard to meet the class standards. I looked forward to each class meeting and students from both classes have continued to reach out to me about related matters since those classes ended. As for the two students in MS 325 who came up short, I am not sure what I could do to change their attitude towards work. There were other students in the class who struggled with aspects of assignments but we worked together and they were committed to learning something new and difficult. Journalism is hard. I think the workshop structure of the class – and sharing the recent work of really innovative professional journalists – helped. The two students who fell behind were smart, slightly older young men who seemed to think that if they did things their way long enough, eventually I'd accept it as "enough." We had many discussions throughout the semester about why this would not work, especially in an upper division production class (no plagiarism, no single-source stories, no "puff" pieces). As you can imagine, they were not happy with me and my evaluations will reflect this. Unfortunately, the evaluation

system doesn't take these back stories into account and as a term, I feel the pressure to balance what I know is right as a teacher with what might serve me as an employee. Seventeen years in, I keep leaning towards the former. Any advice you'd have on how to deal with students who ignore instructions, skip class, plagiarize or don't turn in work at all, but expect leniency, would be appreciated. In my experience, such students are the exception, but it only takes a couple of them to destroy the evaluation numbers in a smaller class.

2. What were the most important suggestions/feedback from the FDCD on your last assessment report (for academic year 2017-2018, submitted in October 2018)? How did you incorporate or address the suggestion(s) in the more recent assessment discussed in this report?

- **Suggestions (Major/Graduate/Certificate):**

- **Suggestions (Minor):**

This is the first assessment submitted so we have received no feedback at this point. We welcome your advice and insights.

## **VI. BIG PICTURE**

What have you learned about your program from successive rounds of assessment? Is a picture of the whole program starting to emerge? For example, what areas of strength have emerged? What opportunities of improvement have you identified?

- **Big Picture (Major/Graduate/Certificate):**

- **Big Picture (Minor):**

This is my first experience with this.

## **VII. Feedback to your Assessment Team**

**What suggestions do you have for your assessment team (the Faculty Directors of Curriculum Development and the Associate Dean for Academic Effectiveness)? What can we do to improve the process?**

## ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

(Any rubrics used for assessment, relevant tables, charts and figures should be included here)

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**Course: MS 420 American Journalism Ethics Fall 2018**

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**Journalism Minor Learning Outcome #1: Production**  
**Assessment completed by Teresa Moore**  
**Course: MS 325 Magazine Spring 2019**

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| b. Student gathers, evaluates, verifies and contextualizes information from a variety of sources – direct observation, interviews and secondary sources and documents.  | 7  | 5  | 1 | 1   |
| c. Student is able to convey information in a fair, accurate and engaging manner, regardless of medium.   | 6  | 6  | 1 | 1   |
| d. Student gains experience reporting on the record stories on and off campus.  | 6  | 6  | 1 | 1   |
| e. Students can fairly and accurately report the perspectives and experiences of sources like and unlike themselves.  | 6  | 6  | 1 | 1   |
| Totals N (%)  | 49 | 37 | 7 | 7   |