

University of Arizona School of Journalism Undergraduate Program

Report Card — 2023

Introductory note:

Self-assessment is paramount for improvement. It's also an essential element to remaining one of the 100 or so undergraduate journalism programs in the nation accredited by the **Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications**. On these pages we provide some quantifiable measurements of school performance and what we are doing to achieve our goal of educating our undergraduate journalism students to serve Arizona, society at large, and the world. We also have provided all our **2017-18 re-accreditation and academic program review information** online, including site-team reports since 1964, when the undergraduate journalism program was first accredited.

The school adopted its first assessment plan in 1999. We have continued to update our assessment plan since its inception. The goal is to figure out whether students are leaving the program prepared for the workplace and competent in the school's **12 core student learning outcomes**, which are based on ACEJMC's 12 Professional Values and Competencies. Students, parents, and the public must know that their tax and tuition dollars are making a difference. The school employs quantitative and qualitative assessment indicators, both direct and indirect, of student learning (see the **assessment plan**). Below are some of the indicators of the school's performance. If you have any questions or suggestions, please let us know!

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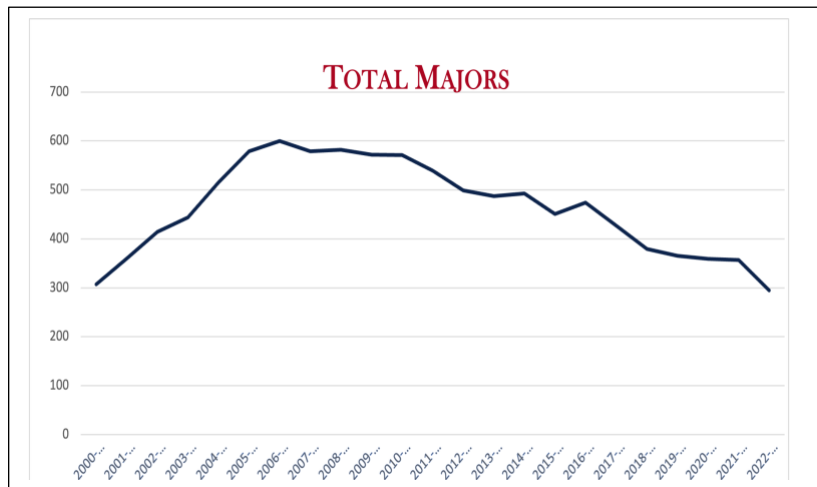
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August 15, 2023

1. Undergraduate enrollment allows more attention for students

Undergraduate enrollment has gradually declined over the past 15 years from a high of 600 students to the current 295 students. This decline may relate to changes in the media ecosystem over that period of time. We have adjusted to these changes by bringing class sizes in line with faculty numbers, and as a result, students are given more attention. The school is large enough to support resources for students, yet small enough that students receive individualized attention by world-class faculty. It should be noted that, although enrollment has declined, it is still higher than it was in academic year 2000-2001.

Academic Year	Total Majors
2000-01	307
2001-02	360
2002-03	414
2003-04	444
2004-05	515
2005-06	579
2006-07	600
2007-08	579
2008-09	582
2009-10	572
2010-11	571
2011-12	539
2012-13	499
2013-14	487
2014-15	493
2015-16	451
2016-17	474
2017-18	427
2018-19	379
2019-20	365
2020-21	359
2021-22	357
2022-23	295



2. Retention rates—most students stay

Retention is an indicator of whether incoming first-year undergraduate journalism students tend to stay with the major or switch to another major by their second year. In fall 2021, 83 percent of 20120-21 first-year students returned to the program. Our analysis indicates that some of our entering majors move to other majors by their sophomore year. As a result, we have revised our undergraduate curriculum to provide students with more flexibility in their programs in turn affording them the opportunity to explore and grow within the major. We have also instituted two new programs – a bilingual journalism program and a program in studies of global media—each with undergraduate and graduate student contingents.

Fall Term	Freshmen	Returned 2nd Year	UA Return Rate
2001	63	83%	76%
2002	91	78%	77%
2003	75	79%	79%
2004	101	83%	79%
2005	102	74%	79%
2006	96	75%	80%
2007	82	76%	79%
2008	96	82%	78%
2009	104	72%	77%
2010	110	77%	77%
2011	111	77%	80%
2012	82	80%	78%
2013	74	78%	81%
2014	86	81%	80%
2015	67	78%	80%
2016	51	86%	83%
2017	57	72%	81%
2018	76	72%	84%
2019	61	82%	86%
2020	55	76%	84%
2021	69	83%	**
*2022			

** Data not available until 2024

3. Graduation rate strong despite pandemic

Below are the percentages of freshmen journalism students who graduate within four years and within six years, compared to graduation rates for the University of Arizona as a whole. The 4th year graduation rebounded to 46% for fourth-year graduates who started in 2018, a cohort whose education encompassed several pandemic years. The journalism school 6th year graduation rate of 68% for the same 2017 cohort exceeded the UA 6th year average graduation rate of 64%. This suggests that the 2017 cohort of journalism freshmen rebounded somewhat from pandemic setbacks.

Fall Term	Freshmen	JOUR students Graduated 4th Year	UA 4th Year Average	JOUR students Graduated 6th Year
2001	63	37%	34%	56%
2002	91	35%	32%	59%
2003	75	29%	32%	56%
2004	101	41%	34%	56%
2005	102	39%	36%	65%
2006	96	44%	35%	64%
2007	82	42%	40%	54%
2008	96	47%	40%	54%
2009	104	40%	43%	64%
2010	110	49%	42%	59%
2011	111	47%	45%	62%
2012	82	50%	48%	57%
2013	74	55%	47%	63%
2014	86	56%	49%	64%
2015	67	61%	50%	66%
2016	51	58%	54%	64%
2017	57	44%	51%	68%
2018	57	46%	50%	**

** Data not available until spring 2024

4. Students graduate with greater journalism knowledge

The school administers a multiple-choice test to pre-majors as they come into the major (JOUR 105) and to students in their capstone school media courses typically taken by seniors (JOUR 490). Unfortunately, due to a miscommunication, the seniors in JOUR490 were not surveyed even though the freshmen were. The school will learn from this mistake as it undertakes a comprehensive review of our assessment measures.

Assessment Test	2018-19			2019-2020			2020-2021			2021-2022			2022-2023		
	105	490	Diff	105	490	Difference	105	490	Difference	105	490	Difference	105	490	Diff
Press and Democracy	60%	72%	12%	58%	71%	13%	57.0%	87.0%	30.0%	58.0%	76.2%	18.2%	53%	*	
News and the World	38%	50%	12%	52%	57%	5%	49.0%	74.0%	25.0%	45.4%	56.0%	10.6%	40%	*	
Law of the Press	42%	61%	19%	43%	61%	18%	50.6%	73.0%	22.4%	46.6%	61.2%	14.6%	48%	*	
Ethics	62%	68%	6%	61%	67%	6%	56.6%	76.0%	19.4%	57.7%	74.5%	16.8%	55%	*	
Writing	51%	68%	17%	53%	71%	18%	61.0%	68.0%	7.0%	50.2%	62.7%	12.5%	50%	*	
AP Style & Grammar	51%	68%	17%	53%	71%	18%	61.0%	68.0%	7.0%	50.2%	64.7%	14.5%	50%	*	
Math	50%	57%	7%	51%	55%	4%	54.5%	60.0%	5.5%	44.9%	51.8%	6.9%	46%	*	
Media Theory	35%	54%	19%	47%	61%	14%	45.2%	57.8%	12.6%	44.9%	61.5%	16.6%	39%	*	
Diversity	44%	51%	7%	47%	65%	18%	48.2%	64.5%	16.3%	42.9%	57.1%	14.2%	41%	*	
Average	48%	61%	13%	52%	64%	13%	53.7%	69.8%	16.1%	49.0%	62.9%	13.9%	46%		

5. Students leave the school better writers

The school tests beginning students' writing ability (in JOUR 205) and compares it to the writing ability of those in senior school media courses (JOUR 490). Students write a story based on provided notes, and judges rate the stories according to six criteria. The chart below provides a visual image of the average of all six criteria scores from academic year 2012-13 to academic year 2022-23. The high point in improvement in student writing was in academic year 2014-15. It should be noted that the pandemic likely impacted test-taking conditions which might have influenced the variability in student performance during the pandemic years - including 2022-23. We are currently reviewing and overhauling our assessment to account for changes in curriculum and writing competencies.

Writing Test	2018-19			2019-20			2020-2021			2021-2022			2022-2023		
	105	490	Diff	205	490	Diff	205	490	Diff	205	490	Diff	105	490	Diff
Writing	2.7	3.3	0.6	2.6	3.7	1.1	2.4	4	1.6	2.4	2.6	0.2	2.2	2.7	0.5
Numeracy	1.9	3.2	1.3	2.7	3.4	0.7	2.1	3.9	1.8	1.4	1.2	-0.2	1.7	1.4	-0.3
Critical Thinking	1.9	2.6	0.7	2.2	3.1	0.9	1.6	3.2	1.6	1.7	3	1.3	1.5	2.5	1
Ethics	1.3	2	0.7	2.4	3.4	1	2.3	3.2	0.9	1.4	2.4	1.0	1.4	3	1.7
Accuracy	1.6	2.7	1.1	2.7	3.8	1.1	2.8	3.9	1.1	2.3	3	0.7	2	2.6	0.6
Average	1.88	2.76	0.88	2.52	3.48	0.96	2.24	3.64	1.4	1.84	2.44	0.6	1.76	2.44	0.7

6. Students' self-reported mixed comfort with technology

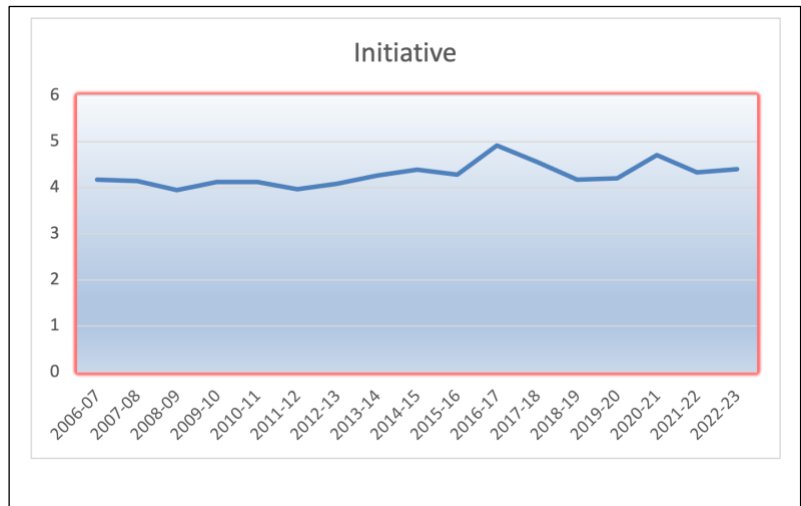
The school wants to make sure students are prepared to cope with increasing technology in the workplace and has implemented several classes teaching technological skills including multimedia, video editing, and using mobile applications. Students have been required to take one class in photojournalism and another class in multimedia. Unfortunately, due to a miscommunication, only the freshmen were given the survey, seniors were not. The school will learn from this mistake as it undertakes a review of our assessment measures.

Tech Comfort	2018-19			2019-2020			2020-2021			2021-2022			2022-2023		
	105	490	Diff	105	490	Diff	105	490	DIFF	105	490	DIFF	105	490	DIFF
Still Images	34%	70%	37%	39%	51%	12%	35%	38%	3%	36%	52%	16%	32%	*	
Sound	20%	49%	29%	20%	46%	26%	28%	29%	1%	28%	39%	11%	34%	*	
Images and Sound	27%	40%	13%	18%	40%	22%	36%	50%	14%	29%	39%	10%	34%	*	
Video	43%	51%	8%	33%	54%	21%	44%	58%	6%	41%	60%	19%	41%	*	
Media Platforms	28%	44%	16%	21%	46%	25%	24%	42%	18%	30%	43%	13%	28%	*	
Photoshop	15%	17%	2%	8%	14%	6%	7%	21%	14%	6%	13%	7%	4%	*	
Premier/Final Cut	8%	36%	28%	7%	36%	29%	7%	36%	29%	6%	13%	7%	0%	*	
Pagination (InDesign)	5%	16%	12%	1%	11%	10%	3%	21%	18%	4%	13%	9%	1%	*	
Social Media	42%	65%	23%	35%	61%	26%	46%	67%	21%	37%	48%	11%	4%	*	
Blogging	31%	38%	7%	33%	47%	14%	38%	38%	-1%	24%	34%	10%	27%	*	
Tweeting News	37%	44%	7%	30%	53%	23%	35%	38%	3%	27%	39%	12%	28%	*	
Mobile Apps	37%	38%	2%	32%	44%	12%	33%	33%	0%	33%	47%	14%	33%	*	
Average	27%	42%	15%	23%	42%	19%	28%	39%	11%	25%	37%	12%	22%	*	

7. Employers satisfied with UA journalism interns

The school initiated several steps to make sure students are well-prepared for the job market and gain the practical on-the-job experience they need. This included developing an “apprentice” class in 2007 with the local newspaper. The school hired an internship coordinator in 2007 to help prepare students for the workplace and has continued its successful internship program since that time. Intern supervisors rate the interns on a variety of measures, including their writing and initiative, and those ratings have continued to be higher than ratings achieved during the first year of the program which was academic year 2006-07.

Year	Writing	Initiative
2006-07	3.85	4.17
2007-08	4.12	4.14
2008-09	4.17	3.95
2009-10	4.22	4.12
2010-11	4.24	4.12
2011-12	4.08	3.97
2012-13	4.34	4.08
2013-14	4.95	4.26
2014-15	4.55	4.39
2015-16	4.29	4.28
2016-17	4.39	4.91
2017-18	4.56	4.56
2018-19	4.17	4.17
2019-20	4	4.2
2020-21	4.86	4.71
2021-22	4.38	4.33
2022-23	4.7	4.4



8. Average GPAs of journalism at an all-time high

The average GPA of journalism majors has ranged from 3.01 to 3.25, about the same or higher than students GPAs university-wide, and with a steady increase from 2018 to 2022. We do not currently have the GPA data for 2022-2023, but we will add it to our report when the UA releases it.

9. Students report learning more in our classes

Each semester students fill out an online survey rating for each of their classes and professors. Over the years between 2003 and 2019, the average score on these Teacher Course Evaluations for “teaching effectiveness” was most frequently higher than the average college-wide scores. However, in the 2019-20 academic year, the university switched from a faculty-oriented TCE (Teacher-Course Evaluation) to a course-focused SCS (Student Course Survey).

For 2022, we used the SCS question, “**This course expanded my knowledge and skills in this subject matter,**” as a substitute metric to ensure students are learning in our classes.

Total Responses = 650

Strongly Agree	466 (77%)
Agree	144 (22%)
Uncertain	14 (2%)
Disagree	19 (3%)
Strongly Disagree	7 (1%)

