

University of Arizona School of Journalism Undergraduate Program

Report Card — 2022

Introductory note:

On July 1, 2022, Director Retis and Associate Director Swanberg assumed the directorship and associate directorship of the University of Arizona School of Journalism. We have assumed responsibility for producing this year's report card and intend to continue this yearly assessment of undergraduate learning outcomes as required by the ACEJMC accreditation process. We also intend to review the current assessment plan over the next academic year and update measures of learning outcomes as needed.

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 many 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!

It should be noted that in spite of the challenges posed by the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, our students have demonstrated perseverance and resilience.

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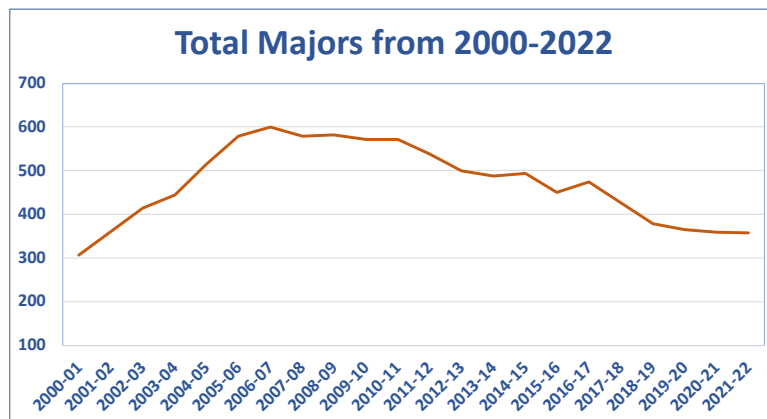
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August 15, 2022

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 357 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



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 2020, 76 percent of 2019-20 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	**	**

** won't be available until fall 2022

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 rate dipped to 44% for fourth-year graduates who started in 2017, a cohort whose education encompassed several pandemic years. The journalism school 6th year graduation rate of 66% 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%	**

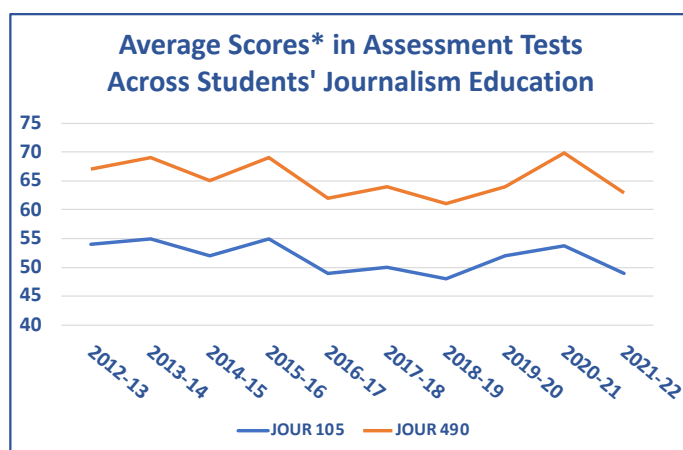
**** Data not available until spring 2023**

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). Below are tables comparing the scores of seniors to the scores of pre-majors over nine assessed categories including press and democracy, ethics, writing, and law of the press. We saw big improvements over the years in the students' understanding of the press and democracy, ethics, and law of the press. While the overall average of scores did dip somewhat during the most recent pandemic year from a high point of 16.1% improvement in journalism knowledge during academic year 2020-21 to the 2021-22 improvement rate of 13.9, the average improvement rate of all categorical test scores from academic year 2012-2013 through academic year 2021-2022 is 13.6% demonstrating relatively stable performance over time.

Assessment Test	2012-13			2013-14			2014-15			2015-16			2016-17		
	105	490	Diff	105	490	Diff	105	490	Diff	105	490	Diff	105	490	Diff
Press and Democracy	51%	78%	27%	60%	80%	20%	52%	76%	24%	56%	80%	24%	62%	80%	18%
News and the World	45%	48%	3%	48%	51%	3%	47%	55%	8%	49%	61%	13%	45%	51%	6%
Law of the Press	38%	52%	14%	42%	63%	21%	39%	46%	7%	44%	68%	24%	39%	54%	15%
Ethics	75%	90%	15%	69%	93%	24%	72%	89%	17%	56%	84%	28%	56%	70%	14%
Writing	76%	92%	16%	70%	94%	24%	47%	68%	21%	73%	94%	20%	51%	64%	13%
AP Style & Grammar	45%	58%	13%	46%	59%	13%	47%	68%	21%	46%	60%	14%	51%	65%	13%
Math	53%	63%	10%	53%	59%	6%	63%	67%	4%	68%	81%	12%	50%	68%	18%
Media Theory	48%	60%	12%	55%	61%	6%	51%	57%	6%	54%	67%	13%	40%	57%	17%
Diversity	57%	62%	5%	55%	64%	9%	54%	56%	2%	65%	60%	-6%	44%	51%	7%
Average	54%	67%	13%	55%	69%	14%	52%	65%	12%	55%	69%	14%	49%	62%	13%

Assessment Test	2017-18			2018-19			2019-20			2020-21			2021-22		
	105	490	Diff	105	490	Diff	105	490	Diff	105	490	Diff	105	490	Diff
Press and Democracy	58%	80%	22%	60%	72%	12%	58%	71%	13%	57.0%	87.0%	30.0%	58.0%	76.2%	18.2%
News and the World	41%	60%	19%	38%	50%	12%	52%	57%	5%	49.0%	74.0%	25.0%	45.4%	56.0%	10.6%
Law of the Press	40%	65%	25%	42%	61%	19%	43%	61%	18%	50.6%	73.0%	22.4%	46.6%	61.2%	14.6%
Ethics	59%	75%	16%	62%	68%	6%	61%	67%	6%	56.6%	76.0%	19.4%	57.7%	74.5%	16.8%
Writing	57%	68%	11%	51%	68%	17%	53%	71%	18%	61.0%	68.0%	7.0%	50.2%	62.7%	12.5%
AP Style & Grammar	57%	68%	11%	51%	68%	17%	53%	71%	18%	61.0%	68.0%	7.0%	50.2%	64.7%	14.5%
Math	48%	56%	8%	50%	57%	7%	51%	55%	4%	54.5%	60.0%	5.5%	44.9%	51.8%	6.9%
Media Theory	40%	50%	10%	35%	54%	19%	47%	61%	14%	45.2%	57.8%	12.6%	44.9%	61.5%	16.6%
Diversity	41%	50%	9%	44%	51%	7%	47%	65%	18%	48.2%	64.5%	16.3%	42.9%	57.1%	14.2%
Average	50%	64%	14%	48%	61%	13%	52%	64%	13%	53.7%	69.8%	16.1%	49.0%	62.9%	13.9%



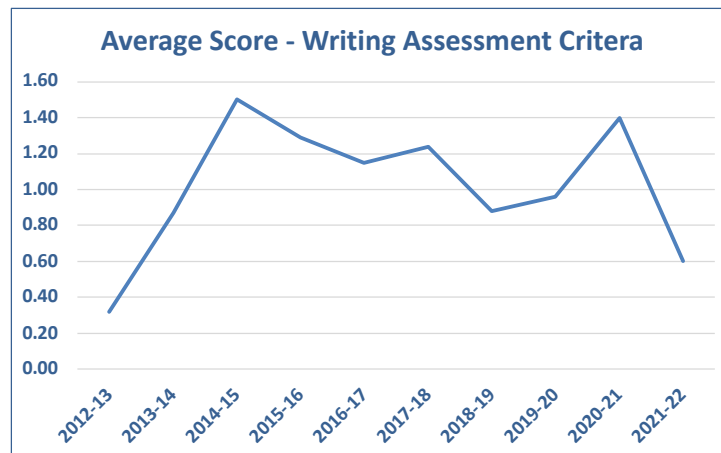
*Average of all categorical scores for academic years 2012-13 to 2021-22

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 tables below provide individual scores for these 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 2021-22. 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 2021-22. We plan to review our assessment program – including the writing test – during the next academic year.

Writing Test	2012-13			2013-14			2014-15			2015-16			2016-17			2017-18		
	205	490	Diff	205	490	Diff	205	490	Diff	205	490	Diff	105	490	Diff	105	490	Diff
Writing	1.65	2.08	0.43	2.20	3.52	1.32	2.12	3.90	1.78	2.52	4.36	1.84	2.27	4.01	1.74	2.3	3.8	1.5
Numeracy	1.13	1.08	-0.05	1.95	2.18	0.23	2.00	3.30	1.30	2.71	3.54	0.83	2.58	3.64	1.06	2.3	3.6	1.3
Critical Thinking	1.26	2.03	0.77	2.24	3.42	1.18	2.18	3.80	1.62	2.75	4.31	1.56	2.31	4.4	2.09	2.4	3.7	1.3
Ethics	1.10	1.94	0.84	2.31	3.12	0.81	2.08	3.20	1.10	2.45	3.60	1.15	2.22	2.96	0.74	2.1	3	0.9
Accuracy	1.62	1.25	-0.37	2.36	3.19	0.83	2.10	3.80	1.70	2.78	3.83	1.05	2.43	2.54	0.11	2.1	3.3	1.2
Average	1.35	1.68	0.32	2.21	3.09	0.87	2.10	3.60	1.50	2.64	3.93	1.29	2.362	3.51	1.15	2.24	3.48	1.24

Writing Test	2018-19			2019-20			2020-2021			2021-2022		
	105	490	Diff	205	490	Diff	205	490	Diff	205	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
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
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
Ethics	1.3	2	0.7	2.4	3.4	1	2.3	3.2	0.9	1.4	2.4	1
Accuracy	1.6	2.7	1.1	2.7	3.8	1.1	2.8	3.9	1.1	2.3	3	0.7
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



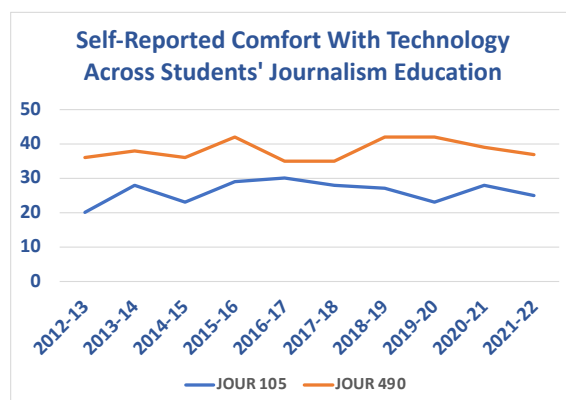
6. Students' self-reported comfort with technology improves across a student's journalism education

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. Surveys of technological comfort show that those in senior school media courses are more comfortable with technology than first-year students, particularly in audio recording, photography, social media, and Final Cut Pro/X/Premiere. Academic year 2020-21 saw a slight decline in the average comfort with technology, which might be attributed to a combination of 2020-21 JOUR 105 students coming in with stronger technology skills and students being remote during the pandemic. More study would be necessary to establish the cause or causes of changes in technology comfort – particularly during the pandemic years.

Tech Comfort	2012-13			2013-14			2014-15			2015-16			2016-17			2017-18		
	105	490	Diff	105	490	Diff	105	490	Diff	105	490	Diff	105	490	Diff	105	490	Diff
Still Images	32%	57%	25%	39%	49%	10%	32%	51%	19%	35%	49%	14%	42%	48%	6%	40%	56%	16%
Sound	18%	47%	29%	20%	39%	19%	20%	35%	15%	28%	47%	19%	18%	32%	14%	25%	35%	10%
Images and Sound	29%	47%	18%	24%	48%	24%	28%	43%	15%	31%	48%	17%	30%	37%	7%	25%	38%	13%
Video	28%	42%	14%	34%	46%	12%	41%	42%	1%	39%	44%	5%	40%	52%	12%	35%	35%	0%
Media Platforms	22%	33%	11%	25%	37%	12%	27%	43%	16%	30%	49%	19%	27%	40%	13%	30%	22%	-8%
Photoshop	13%	23%	10%	13%	25%	12%	12%	23%	11%	13%	30%	17%	14%	16%	2%	9%	16%	7%
Premier/Final Cut	6%	28%	22%	8%	42%	34%	7%	35%	28%	11%	46%	35%	19%	32%	13%	8%	29%	21%
Pagination (InDesign)	8%	7%	-1%	6%	7%	1%	7%	16%	9%	4%	11%	7%	6%	8%	2%	5%	5%	0%
Social Media	32%	53%	21%	42%	56%	14%	34%	50%	16%	47%	54%	7%	51%	44%	-7%	46%	58%	12%
Blogging	26%	43%	17%	41%	42%	1%	28%	40%	12%	38%	43%	5%	33%	26%	-7%	37%	45%	8%
Tweeting News	30%	49%	19%	42%	42%	0%	40%	40%	0%	35%	45%	10%	43%	48%	5%	40%	51%	11%
Mobile Apps	32%	38%	6%	32%	32%	0%	28%	41%	13%	38%	45%	7%	37%	37%	0%	41%	40%	-1%
Average	20%	36%	16%	28%	38%	10%	23%	36%	13%	29%	42%	13%	30%	35%	5%	28%	35%	7%

The 2012-2013 assessment was conducted in the spring of 2013.

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



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.

Academic year	Writing
2006-07	3.85
2007-08	4.12
2008-09	4.17
2009-10	4.22
2010-11	4.24
2011-12	4.08
2012-13	4.34
2013-14	4.95
2014-15	4.55
2015-16	4.29
2016-17	4.39
2017-18	4.56
2018-19	4.17
2019-20	4
2020-21	4.86
2021-22	4.38

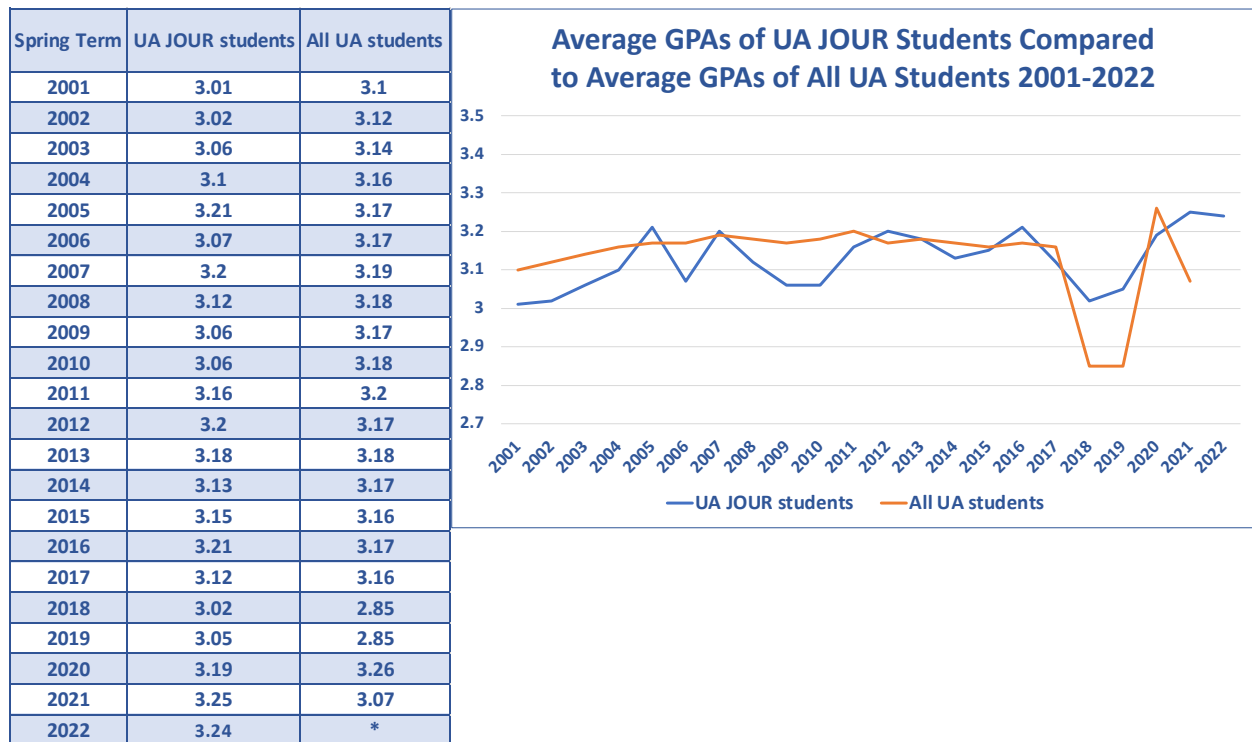


Academic Year	Initiative
2006-07	4.17
2007-08	4.14
2008-09	3.95
2009-10	4.12
2010-11	4.12
2011-12	3.97
2012-13	4.08
2013-14	4.26
2014-15	4.39
2015-16	4.28
2016-17	4.91
2017-18	4.56
2018-19	4.17
2019-20	4.2
2020-21	4.71
2021-22	4.33



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

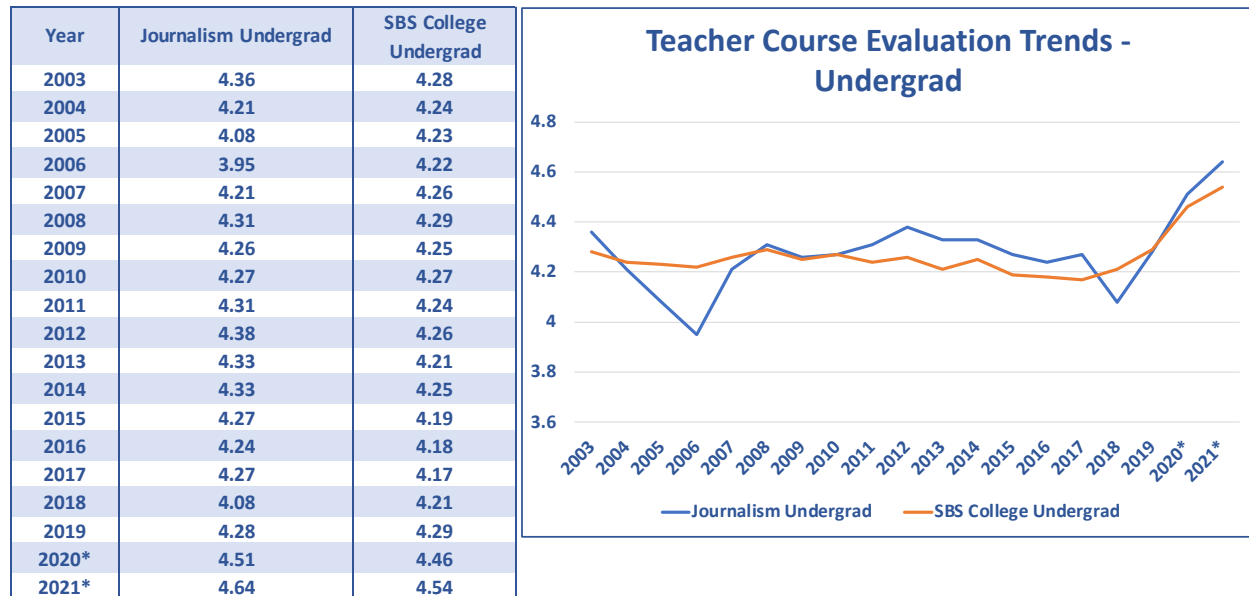
In 2006 the school implemented a minimum GPA of 2.5 to become a major, which was a little higher than the standard for remaining at the university (2.0) but still lower than the required GPA levels of some campus units. As a result, the average GPA of journalism majors has ranged from 3.01 to 3.25, about the same or higher than students GPAs university-wide, and with a steady increase from 2018 to 2021.



*Unavailabe at this time

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.



*The university switched from a faculty-oriented TCE (Teacher-Course Evaluation) to a course-focused SCS (Student Course Survey) in the 2019-20 academic year. The new survey does not include a rating for teaching effectiveness. For 2020 and 2021, we used the question, “This course expanded my knowledge and skills in this subject matter,” as a substitute metric to ensure students are learning in our classes. We will re-evaluate how best to measure the effectiveness of our teaching during the next academic year. Please note that survey data for 2022 is not yet available.

<https://www.acejmc.org/policies-process/principles/>